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Frontispiece.

J. Hall sculp

ORLANDO FURIOSO:

TRANSLATED

FROM THE ITALIAN .

OF

LUDOVICO ARIOSTO;

WITH

NOTES,

BY JOHN HOOLE.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

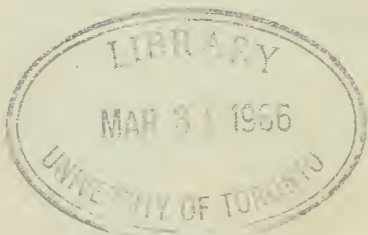
VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

THE fabulous histories of wandering knights, distressed damsels, giants, enchanted castles, and the whole train of legendary adventures, that, for a long time, were the delight of our ancestors, are now universally exploded: the inimitable satire of Cervantes has contributed not a little to bring them into disrepute; but however justly he may have ridiculed their many absurdities, yet, perhaps, we have too rashly adopted the contempt, which almost every one now professes for writings, from which it is certain that the greatest poets have derived many fine images; to which we are probably, in a great measure, indebted for the FAIRY QUEEN of our admired Spenser, and which have been the foundation of the ORLANDO FURIOSO, that has procured to its author the appellation of DIVINE.

The Italians have among them many works of a similar nature with this poem, being accustomed to translate, or compose romances in the octavo stanza. Among others, Bernardo Tasso, the father of the great Torquato, published a free translation of the Amadis de Gaul, divided into one hundred cantos: but the much greater part of these performances are not to be considered as rising to any degree of competition with Ariosto,

being little else than wild stories of chivalry, with scarce any tincture of poetical imagery and expression; or heavy dull narratives of fiction without imagination, and of events without interest.

Most of these poems, or rather rhyming romances, are drawn from the current romances of the times; such as the history of king Arthur, and his round table, and the account of Merlin and his prophecies: but the chief of them are built on the romantic history of Charlemain, and the twelve peers of France, called Paladins; which was a title of honour given by Charlemain, to that number of valiant men belonging to his court, who employed their arms in defence of the faith. The principal of these was Orlando, the great hero of chivalry, whose fabulous achievements filled all the books and provincial songs of that age. It is recorded, that when William the Conqueror marched with his Normans to engage Harold, at the memorable battle of Hastings, his soldiers animated each other by singing the popular ballad of the exploits of Roland, or Orlando.

Dr. Burney, in his elegant History of Music, a book not merely professional, as the title might seem to indicate, but full of general information, has presented us with a great literary curiosity in this old military song, which he thus introduces: "Charlemain had a great passion for these heroic songs, and, like our Alfred, not only had them collected, but knew them by heart. One of these, in praise of Roland, the Orlando Inamorato, and the Furioso, of Boyardo, Berni, and Ariosto, was longer preserved than any of the rest. This, the French historians tell us, was begun at the battle of Hastings, by a knight called Taillefer, on whom this honour was

conferred for his strong and powerful voice. Here he performed the office of herald minstrel at the head of the Norman army, and was among the first that fell in the onset." The song, to which I beg to refer the reader, so far as it is preserved, affords an admirable picture of the rough martial spirit of the times. I have here inserted one stanza, with the translation, that gives, though in a ludicrous vein, the exact character of Orlando, as drawn by the romance writers.

" Pour l'ennemi qui resistoit,
 " Reservant toute son audace,
 " A celui qui se soumettoit,
 " Il accordoit toujours sa grace.
 " L'humanité dans son grand cœur,
 " Renaissoit après la victoire,
 " Et le soir même le vainqueur
 " Au vaincu proposoit à boire."

On stubborn foes he vengeance wreak'd,
 And laid about him like a Tartar;
 But if for mercy once they squeak'd,
 He was the first to grant them quarter.
 The battle won, of Roland's soul,
 Each milder virtue took possession:
 To vanquish'd foes he o'er a bowl,
 His heart surrender'd at discretion.

" The song (says Dr. Burney) upon Roland, continued in favour among the French soldiers, so late as the battle of Poitiers, in the time of their king John, who, upon reproaching one of them with singing at a time when there was no Rolands left; was answered, That Rolands would be found if they had a Charlemain at their head *."

* See Dr. Burney's History of Music, vol. ii. p. 375.

The romance of Charlemain is said to have been the production of a monk, about two hundred years after the time of that prince: to this story the author has prefixed the name of Turpin, archbishop of Rheims, a prelate of reputation, who accompanied Charlemain in most of his expeditions, and is reported to have written his life; which work is supposed to be lost.

The most celebrated of the Italian poems of the romance kind, before Ariosto, are the *MORGANTE MAGGIORE*, of Pulci, and the *ORLANDO INAMORATO* of Boyardo. The first of these was published in the year 1488, and has its name from Morgante a giant, the principal personage of the poem, whom the poet converts to Christianity, and makes the companion of Orlando in his adventures. This poem, which is of a very singular nature, concludes with the death of Orlando, and the defeat of the Christians in the valley of Ronscevalles; and is thought by some to be entirely a burlesque on the fables of the Paladins: but though many parts of it may appear to be ludicrous, yet others are undoubtedly serious, as the relation of Orlando's death, where that hero, before he departs from life, utters a very devout prayer, which surely no imagination can construe into ridicule. The Italians have indeed many burlesque poems, and among others, one entitled *RICCIARDETTO*, written about the year 1700, wherein the characters of Orlando, Rinaldo, and other heroes of romance, are introduced evidently to ridicule the actions related of them, which ridicule consists in carrying the fictions to the highest pitch of incredibility: Among other passages, the author describes a tree, the branches of which extended twenty miles round; at the foot of which was a

damself ready to be devoured by two toads, that are represented so large as to be capable of encountering with a whale. In another place, Orlandino and Rinalduccio, the sons of Orlando and Rinaldo, attack the dwelling of Death, have a personal engagement with him, and by force take from him his scythe and darts. In fictions of this kind the intention of the poet is apparent; accordingly Ricciardetto is placed by Mr. Baretti among the mock Epics, while the poems of Pulci, Boyardo, and Ariosto are all ranked by him in the number of serious pieces.

Baillet, in his review of modern poets*, seems to have little knowledge of Pulci, and only quotes the opinion of Father Rapin, who affirms that Pulci, in his poem of *Morgante*, observes no propriety, and appears to have debauched his fancy by the perusal of books of chivalry. But Monnoye, in his notes on Baillet, delivers himself thus: “Luigi Pulci, was a Florentine, and undertook his *Morgante* at the instigation of Lucrece Tomobuoni, the mother of Laurence de Medicis. This extraordinary poem, which is in the octavo stanza, is divided into twenty-eight cantos: the author has observed no rules in the composition of his work, and this not from a designed neglect, as Vincentio Gravina professes to believe, but because he was entirely ignorant of them. He has, without any regard to the judgment of the critics, confounded time and place, united the serious with the comic, and made the giant, his hero, die in a burlesque manner, by the bite of a sea-crab in his heel; which event happens in the xxth canto, so that he is

* Jugemens des savans.

spoken of no more in the eight following. The beauty of his narrative, however, compensates for all his faults, and the lovers of the Florentine dialect are to this day delighted with the *Morgante*. Some writers attribute this poem to Politian, and affirm that Pulci had it from him; but this appears very improbable, as all the Italian poems we have of Politian, are in a very different style."

Mr. Baretti, in his account of the manners and customs of Italy, speaks thus of Pulci: "It is reported by the biographer of Luigi Pulci, that this poet, who flourished about the year 1450, used often to sing long cantos extempore at the table of Laurence de Medicis. It is even pretended he afterwards put into writing many of those cantos, by the advice and assistance of Laurence himself, Argyropolo, Politian, Giambullari, Marcilius Ficinus, and other learned men, familiarly admitted to the table of that famous patron of learning; and that the *Morgante Maggiore* was thus formed, a long poem of the Epic kind, incoherent indeed and full of extravagancies, yet no less delightful than the *Furioso* itself."

But whatever merit Pulci may have with an Italian, he would be little relished by a mere English reader, to whom his fictions must appear highly extravagant, and his humour puerile and absurd: nor indeed could we bear, what must appear to us an uncountable mixture of religion, heroism, chivalry, and buffoonery. The exordium of his poem is almost word for word from the beginning of St. John's Gospel*, and every canto opens

* In principio era il Verbo appresso a Dio,
Ed era Iddio il Verbo, e il Verbo lui, &c.

Morgante Mag. C. i. St. 1.

with a religious address, or allusion to some point of scripture, which unaccountable practice seems to have been pursued by most of these kind of romance writers of that age.

It is to be observed, that though many of the names in Pulci are the same in Boyardo and Ariosto, yet the actions of the first have no sort of connection with those of the last-mentioned poets.

In the year 1496, Matteo Maria Boyardo, count of Scandiano, published his *ORLANDO INAMORATO*, the subject of which is the falling in love of Orlando, and the great actions performed by him for Angelica, in various parts of the world, interspersed with the adventures of many other personages, most of whom afterwards make their appearance in the *Furioso*.

It is said by Castelvetro, that the names of Agramant, Sacripant, Gradasso, &c. given to the heroes of Boyardo's romance, were the real names of the vassals of that count, living in Scandiano, a principality of the Modenese*.

This may perhaps be the case with respect to many of the names made use of by him; but it cannot be so with Agramant, Orlando, Rinaldo, Olivero, and others, that are known to have been popular in the current romances of the times.

This work abounds with a great variety of entertaining incidents, Boyardo being reckoned, by some, one of the greatest inventors that Italy ever produced, but as he was esteemed very inferior to Pulci, in point of language and versification, though far beyond him in other

* Jugemens des savans, see Monnoye's notes.

respects, Dominichi attempted to reduce his poem to better Italian; and about fifty years after Boyardo's death, Francesco Berni, the modern Catullus of Italy, undertook to versify it again, and published his *Rifacimento** of the *Orlando Inamorato*, which met with such general approbation, that the original poem was soon neglected, and at this time the genuine work of Boyardo is little attended to. Berni was not satisfied with making the versification of this poem better; he inserted many stanzas of his own, and changed almost all the beginnings of the cantos, introducing each, after the manner of Ariosto, with some moral reflection arising from the subject.

Of the *Orlando Inamorato* no translation has appeared in English; and indeed, though it is a work highly entertaining in Berni's dress, it would scarce admit of a translation into English verse, the narrative descending to such familiar images and expressions, as would, by no means, suit the genius of our language and poetry. In the year 1716, the celebrated Le Sage, author of *Gil Blas*, published in French a prose translation, or rather paraphrase, under the title of *Roland L'Amoureux*, in which he has taken considerable liberties with his author, not only changing the order of the incidents, but very often altering the fables, retrenching from the Italian, and adding circumstances of his own, not observing, in this conduct, the example of Berni, who has religiously adhered to the stories, as related by Boyardo, and which have not received any improvement from the imagination of the French translator.

* A new-making or new-modelling a work.

The poem of Orlando Inamorato, though very long, consisting of LXIX cantos, divided into three books, was left unfinished by the death of its author: several continuations were written by different persons, particularly one by Nicolo Agostini, in three books: but all these, being greatly inferior to Boyardo, were disregarded, till in the year 1515, Ariosto, having taken up the same subject, gave the world his ORLANDO FURIOSO, which not only eclipsed all the other continuators of Orlando, but greatly surpassed the performance of Boyardo himself.

The poems of Boyardo and Ariosto, taken together, form a complete series of events, and require little or no reference to other romance writers, to give the reader a perfect knowledge of their story. Ariosto, indeed, is intimately connected with the narrative of Boyardo in the general plan of his poem, and in the continuation of several under parts: but Boyardo does not appear, in one instance, to have taken up and continued any single story from another. It is however certain, that these poets have derived their general fable from various books and poems on the wars of Charlemain, and the actions of his Paladins, and other subjects of chivalry; and that both have frequent allusions to incidents recorded in these books, and particularly in one apparently prior to Boyardo, entitled, "*ASPRAMONTE, in cui si contiene le guerre di Re Guarnieri et Agolante contra Roma e Carlo Magno, e di altre guerre e battaglie, massime dello avvenimento d'Orlando e di molti altri Reali di Francia.*" This book is in XXIII cantos, in ottava rima, the date and author are altogether uncertain; but from many peculiarities of style and idiom, which strongly resemble

the very early writers, it was probably written, if not before, about the time of Pulci; and the beginning of all the cantos have the same strange allusions to scripture doctrine and story, as the Morgante. As to the performance itself, it may be classed with the greater part of the numerous publications of the same nature, but will always retain a value from the consideration that it might have been the principal source of the *Orlando Innamorato* and *Furioso*.

With respect to the separate merits of Boyardo and Ariosto, Le Sage, in the preface to his translation, gives the following character of the two poets.

“These authors have given a free scope to their imagination, which in both was equally noble and lively: if Boyardo has the merit of invention, Ariosto, in return, has every advantage of style and manner, and the copy is doubtless greatly superior to the original. Ariosto is far more polished, his diction is chaster, and he possesses all the elegance of language: his verses are strong and sonorous; his descriptions are admirable and often sublime. On the contrary, Boyardo, is always grovelling and feeble: Ariosto, whether serious or pleasant, is every where entertaining, and preserves a degree of majesty even in his pleasantry: he is the only author who has found out the art of blending the serious with the comic, and the heroic with the familiar: by which means he is truly original, and such an original as no one has yet successfully imitated.”

I shall not enter upon the comparative merits of Tasso and Ariosto: the Italians, in general, give the preference to the Orlando, and other nations allot the first place to the Jerusalem, which undoubtedly has the advantage

with respect to unity of design, regularity of disposition, and dignity of subject: these poems are of so different a nature, that they will not admit of a comparison. Mirabaud, the French translator of the *Jerusalem*, observes, that this matter cannot be more judiciously discussed, than in the words of Horatio Ariosto, nephew to Ludovico, who, however biassed to give the palm to his uncle, has delivered himself in the following manner.

“ We cannot easily enter upon a comparison of these two poets, who have not the least resemblance to each other: the style of the one is throughout serious and elevated, that of the other is often simple and full of pleasantry. Tasso has observed the precepts of Aristotle; Ariosto has taken no guide but nature; Tasso, by subjecting himself to the unity of action, has deprived his poem of a considerable advantage derived from the multiplicity of events; whereas Ariosto, being freed from such restraint, has filled his with a number of incidents that are very delightful to the reader: these great poets have nevertheless both attained the same end, that of pleasing; but they have attained it by different means.”

Girafolo tells us, that from the first publication of his poem in 1515, to the year 1532, when he gave an edition, with his last corrections and improvements, enlarged to the number of XLVI cantos, Ariosto was continually revising and altering it, occasionally applying to the first wits in Italy for their opinion and advice, such as Bembo, Melzo, Novagero, and others mentioned in his concluding book; and that, like Apelles, he submitted his work to the criticisms of all that would examine it.

Ariosto has been called by some a comic poet ; but it should seem that such an opinion must be formed for want of due attention to the several parts of his work, which is undoubtedly serious upon the whole, though occasionally diversified with many sallies of humour. But should we, on this account, deny Ariosto the essentials of Epic poetry, we must, with equal justice, refuse the tragic laurel to our own Shakespeare, because his plays are not pure tragedies. Our bard in his dramatic representation, has drawn his whole picture from the natural world, where events are blended, and where not only the moral characters are varied, but where the same character is seen with very different aspect at different times*.

But whatever liberties we may allow an author like Ariosto, with respect to mixture of character or style, yet proverbial and ludicrous expressions, or vulgar images, immediately mixed with subjects of pathos, or elevation, must be ever disgusting. On this occasion the author of the *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, makes some excellent remarks, which he is led to, from some passages of this kind introduced by Mr. Pope in his *Temple of Fame*.

“ Strokes of pleasantry and humour, and satirical reflections on the foibles of common life, are surely too familiar, and unsuited to a grave and majestic poem †. Such incongruities offend propriety, though I know ingenious persons have endeavoured to excuse them, by saying that they add a variety of imagery to the piece.

* See Dr. Johnson's Preface to Shakespeare.

† What is here said of an entire poem may equally be applied to any part of a poem that comes under this description.

This precept is even defended by a passage from Horace :

Et sermone opus est, modo tristi, sæpe jocosus,
Defendente vicem modò rhetoris atque poëtæ,
Interdum urbani, parcentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas consultò *—

Sat. Lib. 1. Sat. 10. v. 11.

“ But this judicious remark is, I apprehend, confined to ethic and perceptive kinds of writing, which stand in need of being enlivened with lighter images and sportive thoughts, and where strictures on common life may more gracefully be inserted. But in the higher kinds of poetry, they appear as unnatural and out of place, as one of the burlesque scenes of Hemskirke would do in a solemn landscape of Poussin.

“ On the revival of literature the first writers seemed not to have observed any SELECTION in their thoughts and images. Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Ariosto, make very sudden transitions from the sublime to the ridiculous. Chaucer, in his Temple of Mars, among many pictures, has brought in a strange line :

The coke is scalded for all his long ladell.

Again,

As Æsop's dogs contending for the bone †.

* Now change from grave to gay with ready art,
Now play the orator's or poet's part :
In raillery assume a gayer air,
Discreetly hide your strength, your vigour spare.

FRANCIS.

† Dryden has turned the first line thus :

And the cook caught within the raging fire he made.
But he has retained the second line.

“No writer has more religiously observed the decorum here recommended than Virgil*.”

If we examine the poems of Boyardo and Ariosto, we shall find that the second, with respect to the epic part, the wars of Charlemain and Agramant, is not defective in point of unity, as it sets forth one great action, the invasion of France by the Saracens, and concludes with the victory of the Christians by the death or defeat of all the Pagan leaders, although this great action is broken and interrupted, from time to time, by an infinity of episodes and romantic adventures, artfully connected with each other and interwoven with the general fable. But Boyardo has no pretence to unity in any part of his vast and heterogeneous composition, which, beside the lesser incidents, consists of three distinct great actions: the Invasion of France by Gradasso, for the conquest of Durindana and Boyardo: the Siege of Albracca by Agrican king of Tartary, and the other enemies of Galaphron, and his daughter Angelica: and the invasion of France by Agramant to revenge the death of Troyano.

But, notwithstanding Ariosto has undoubtedly a better claim to unity of action, and regularity of design, than his predecessor; yet it is very plain that he never intended to write a regular epic poem, but that he adopted the fashionable mode of that time. As an instance of the taste then prevalent for the wild and desultory narratives of romance, it is said, that when Bernardo Tasso conceived the design of composing a poem from the *Amadis de Gaul*, he had at first reduced it to the plan of

* Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, vol. i. p. 410.

a regular epic, and in that state read part of it to his friends, who gave it so cool a reception, that he thought it advisable to change his purpose, and treat his subject in the same manner as the other popular writers, or Romanzatori*.

Thus Ariosto, having undertaken to continue a well-known story, begun and left unfinished by Boyardo, was necessarily led to vary his narrative and diction, as the different subjects required: and therefore in him is to be found a greater variety of style and manner, than perhaps in any other author.

From the romantic turn of this fable, and the motley character of his writing, many of the French critics, and some others, have been induced, in the cool phlegm of criticism, to pass the severest censures on Ariosto; but it will be seen that such censures are in general futile, being founded on the mistaken opinion, that the Orlando is to be tried by the rules of Aristotle, and the examples of Homer and Virgil: but as no writers of real taste, however strongly prejudiced with the idea of classic excellence, could peruse the Italian poem without sensibly feeling its beauties, it follows that their observations often appear a contradictory mixture of praise and censure, of which the reader will have some idea from the following passages of Baillet, in his *Jugemens des savans* †.

“It is a general received opinion in Italy, that the Orlando Furioso has entirely surpassed every performance that appeared before it, particularly the Orlando of

* Romance writers in verse. See Preface to the *Amadigi* of Bernardo Tasso.

† *Poetes modernes.*

Boyardo, and the Morgante of Pulci: the last by dignity of incidents and majesty of versification, and the former by completing and bringing to perfection the inventions of the count*. M. Rosteau gives it as his opinion, that the Orlando Furioso had no superior, or rival, till the Godfrey of Tasso, which appeared afterwards in the world.

“ Never was any other piece filled with so many and various events as the poem of Ariosto: the whole is a mixture of combats, enchantments, and grotesque adventures; and it is said, that the wits of Italy are still divided concerning the merits of this work, and the Jerusalem Delivered.

“ The Orlando seems to be a trophy raised from the spoils of every other Italian production, in which the author has neglected nothing that his genius or industry could supply him with, in order to enrich his poem, and give it the utmost perfection.

“ Father Rapin has discovered many blemishes in the Orlando Furioso†. In one part he finds that the poet has too much fire; in another, that he is crowded with supernatural events, which are like the crude imaginations of a distempered brain, and which can never be admitted by men of sense, as bearing no resemblance of truth.

“ He says, besides, that his design is too vast without proportion or justness; that his episodes are affected, improbable, injudiciously introduced, and often out of nature; that his heroes are only Paladins, and that his

* Paul Jovius.

† Reflect. critiq. sur la poesie.

poem breathes more an air of romantic chivalry, than a spirit of heroism.

“ In other places, he confesses that Ariosto is pure, elevated, sublime, and admirable in expression; that his descriptions are master-pieces, but that he is altogether deficient in judgment; that the beauty of his expression, joined to the other charms of his versification, has imposed upon the world, and so far dazzled our poets, as to prevent their discovering his many absurdities. ‘ His genius,’ continues Rapin, ‘ resembles those fertile lands that produce, at the same time, weeds and flowers; and though the several parts of his poem are very beautiful, yet the whole, when taken together, does not deserve the title of an Epic poem.’ ”

Gravina, an Italian critic, of great taste and judgment, gives the following opinion of Ariosto: “ After Boyardo, Ariosto took up the same story, but in a far more exalted strain of poetry, and gave a complete ending to the unfinished invention of his predecessor, interspersing every part of his narrative with strong and masterly pictures of the passions and habits of mankind, in so much, that the Furioso may be considered as an assemblage of all that actuates the human mind, love, hatred, jealousy, avarice, anger, and ambition, in their natural colours, with an infinity of examples, of the punishments attendant upon vice. In Boyardo and Ariosto is to be seen the true system of honour known by the name of CHIVALRY. I shall not dwell upon the philosophical and theological doctrines in various parts of Ariosto’s poem, particularly in the cantos where St. John and Astolpho are introduced together. But this poet would not have attained his purpose, nor would

posterity have found in him that lesson of instruction which is ever the province of poetry, if his work had only described the exalted scenes of life, and not descended sometimes to the familiar and common manners, that every rank and station might meet with correction or reproof. For as in Homer, likewise in Ariosto, the general sublimity of character does not exclude the introduction, though rare, yet sometimes necessary, of personages of a lower order. To such a diversity of matter must be joined a diversity of style, which Ariosto has properly observed. In descriptions of dignity, the dignified style must be used; but where the passage approaches to common life, an humble phrase is required. In this respect Ariosto is superior to many, always rising and sinking with his subject. He is indeed reprehensible for the disagreeable breaks in his narrative, and for mingling sometimes, injudiciously, ludicrous reflections or licentious allusions with the most serious matter, for a strain of extravagant hyperbole, sometimes for the use of low and vulgar expressions, for his long and tedious digressions on the families of Ferrara, and on his mistress. But such is the power of Ariosto, that while his work is perusing, almost all his faults and blemishes are lost in the multitude of his excellencies*."

Among the modern writers, Voltaire has been very severe upon Ariosto, particularly in his essay on Epic poetry, where he speaks of him in the following invidious manner:

"Some readers (says he) will be surprised, that Ariosto is not placed among the Epic poets; but it will be pro-

* Gravina della Regione poetica.

per to observe to them, that no one, speaking of Tragedy, would mention *l'AVARE* or *le GRONDEUR**; and whatever may be the opinion of some Italians, the rest of Europe will never place Ariosto on a level with Tasso, till Don Quixote is ranked with the *Æneid*, or Callot with Corregio."

The same Voltaire, who has so far degraded Ariosto in the above passage, has since delivered his sentiments very differently, in a work lately published †, from which, for the uncommonness of the subject, and the manner in which he has treated it, I shall translate such passages as immediately relate to the present inquiry.

"The *Odyssey* of Homer," says he, "seems to have been the model of the *Morgante*, the *Orlando Inamorato*, and the *Orlando Furioso*; and, what rarely happens, the last of these poems is indisputably the best.

"The companions of Ulysses transformed to swine; the winds inclosed in a goat's-skin; musicians with tails of fishes, who devour those that approach them; Ulysses, who follows naked the chariot of a beautiful princess on her return from washing her garments; the same Ulysses, disguised like a beggar, requesting alms, and afterwards killing all the suitors of his old wife, assisted only by his son and two servants; these are imaginations that have given rise to all the romances in verse, that have since been written on similar subjects.

"But the romance of Ariosto is so extensive, so full of variety, so fruitful in every kind of beauty, that after having perused it, I have more than once found my ap-

* Two French Comedies.

† Questions sur l'Encyclopedie, published MDCCLXX. See the article EPOPEE.

petite excited to begin it again; and yet I could never read a single canto of this poem in our prose translations: such are the charms of natural poetry!

“What excited particularly my admiration in this wonderful performance, was the uncommon genius that seems to raise the author above his subject, which he treats with a kind of sportive negligence: he says the sublimest things with the utmost ease, and often concludes them with a stroke of refined and well-timed pleasantry. The *Orlando Furioso* is at once the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Don Quixote*; for the principal knight-errant runs mad, like the Spanish hero, but is infinitely more entertaining. We are interested for *Orlando*, but we take no part in the fortune of *Don Quixote*, who is represented by Cervantes, as a madman, exposed to universal derision.

The *Orlando Furioso* has a merit altogether unknown to the writers of antiquity; which merit is exhibited in the openings of the several cantos. Each canto is an enchanted palace, the vestibule of which is always in a different style, sometimes majestic, sometimes simple, and sometimes grotesque. The poet is, by turns, moral, pleasant, and gallant, but never departs from truth and nature.”

Voltaire, having then asserted that Ariosto equals Homer in his battles, and given some examples to support his assertion, proceeds thus:

“Ariosto has the peculiar talent of making a transition, from these descriptions of terror, to the most voluptuous pictures, and from these last he can, with equal ease, change his subject to the refined doctrines of morality: but the greatest art of the poet appears in his

interesting us so strongly for his heroes and heroines, though they are so many and various: the pathetic incidents in his poem are almost equal in number to the grotesque adventures; and his reader is so pleasingly accustomed to this mixture, that the change steals upon him with the least seeming violence.

“I know not who it was that first propagated the pretended question of Cardinal Hippolito to the author;” “Messer Ludovico, dove havete pigliate tante cогlionerie?” Signor Ludovico, where did you find so many absurdities? The cardinal ought rather to have said, “Dove havete pigliate tante cose divine?” Where did you find so many divine things?

“I formerly durst not rank in the number of Epic poets one, whom at that time I considered as only the first of grotesque writers; but upon a more diligent perusal, I have found him to be as full of sublimity as pleasantry, and now make him this public reparation. It is indeed true, that Leo X. published a bull in favour of the Orlando Furioso, excommunicating all those who should presume to attack that poem; and I shall be very cautious how I incur the censure of such excommunication *.”

Thus has this lively writer signed, as it were, a recantation of some of the errors of his poetical faith, in which perhaps it will appear, that he has no less exaggerated, than he had before depreciated, the merits of Ariosto: however this example may serve to shew how little stability appears in the opinion of this very extraordinary genius, whose spirit so warmly animated his

* See Life of Ariosto, for an examination into the story of this bull.

pen at such an advanced age, but whose writings more frequently appeal to the imagination, than judgment of his reader: I have formerly had occasion to combat some of his strictures on Tasso *; and we have a pregnant instance of his criticisms in his several attacks on Shakespeare, which have been exposed in a most elegant and judicious dissertation on the genius of that immortal poet †.

A remarkable letter remains of Bernardo Tasso, the father of Torquato, in which there is this passage: “Ne so io s’Aristotele nascesse a questo età e vedesse il vaghissimo poema del’ Ariosto, conoscendo la forza del uso, e vedendo che tanto diletta, come l’esperienza si dimostra, mutasse opinione, e consentisse che si potesse far poema eroico di piu azione. Con la sua mirabil dottrina e giudicio, dandogli nova norma e prescrivuondogli novi leggi ‡.

Giuseppe Malatesta published a Dialogue on the New Poetry, or a Defence of the Furioso, and undertook to show, that this poem was composed agreeably to the several rules of poetry, and that it excelled the beauties of Homer and Virgil.

The only poem we have in English of the Gothic romance kind, is the FAIRY QUEEN of Spenser; a poet, whose story and style bear the nearest resemblance to

* See preface to the translation of Tasso.

† Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespeare.

‡ I question if Aristotle had been born in our times to have seen the poem of Ariosto, and had experienced the wonderful delight afforded by the perusal, whether he would not have altered his sentiments, and agreed that an heroic poem might consist of more than one action, and whether his admirable judgment would not have extended the poetic license, and given new laws for epic poetry.

Ariosto: the greatest difference of these two poets is, that the adventures of the English poet are supported by shadowy characters, that set forth one continued allegory; whereas the Italian author gives a narrative of incidents, in which an allegory is only occasionally introduced. Hughes, in the preface to his edition of Spenser's works, prefers the Fairy Queen on this account, alleging, that, "though his fable is often wild, yet it is always emblematical." But, perhaps, upon appealing to the sensations of the reader, Ariosto may even, for this very reason, be found to have the preference; as it will admit of some doubt, whether the constant allegory does not considerably weaken the pathetic effect of the narrative: for what sympathy can we experience, as men, for the misfortunes of an imaginary being, whom we are perpetually reminded to be only the type of some moral, or religious virtue?

With regard to the fables contained in the Italian poets and the old romance writers, the same critic before cited has the following observations, containing an opinion which had been started before by Gravina.

"The writers of the old romances, from whom Ariosto and Spenser have borrowed so largely, are supposed to have had copious imaginations; but may they not be indebted for their invulnerable heroes, their monsters, their enchantments, their gardens of pleasure, their winged steeds, and the like, to the Echidna, to the Circe, to the Medea, to the Achilles, to the Syrens, to the Harpies, to the Phryxus, to the Bellerophon of the ancients? The cave of Polypheme might furnish out the ideas of their giants, and Andromeda might give occasion for stories of distressed damsels on the point of

being devoured by dragons, and delivered at such a critical season by their favourite knights. Some faint traditions of the ancients might have been kept glimmering and alive through the whole barbarous ages, as they are called; and it is not impossible but these have been the parents of the Genii in the eastern, and the Fairies in the western world. To say that Amadis and Sir Tristan have a classical foundation, may at first sight appear paradoxical; but if the subject were examined to the bottom, I am inclined to think that the wildest chimeras in these books of chivalry, with which Don Quixote's library was furnished, would be found to have a close connexion with ancient mythology*.

But although Ariosto's poem is acknowledged to be defective in plan and regularity, yet every particular beauty of the highest species of poetry is to be found in the several parts of it, in which respect Boyardo is greatly deficient, who seldom attains more than to amuse the imagination by the pleasing variety of his fictions. But I must not here omit to take notice of one noble passage in the *Inamorato*, where the encounter of Orlando and Agrican is compared to the meeting of two thunder clouds. Our great Milton has the same simile in the second book of *Paradise Lost*, when Satan and Death prepare to engage. The *Orlando Furioso* may be considered as an Epic, formed on the manners of chivalry. Where the subject of Ariosto rises, Tasso does not appear with greater dignity.

All the battles and single combats in Ariosto are excellent: in the last he is greatly superior to Tasso, and

* Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, vol. ii. page 3.

indeed to most other poets; for in this respect there appears some defect even in the poems of Homer and Virgil, in which there are few good descriptions of this kind. Our own countryman, Spenser, has succeeded best in these passages, for which perhaps he is not a little indebted to the Italian.

Though the general battles of the *Iliad* and *Æneid* are supported with wonderful fire, and every circumstance of terror inimitably introduced to keep the mind suspended and anxious for the event, yet those great poets do not seem to have attended, in the same manner, to the single encounters of their heroes, the issue of which, being generally soon determined, or at least foreseen, seldom raises much anxiety for the fate of the combatants. Virgil, it is true, has improved upon Homer, and the last important action, between *Æneas* and *Turnus*, in the *xii*th book, is conducted with more judgment than any single combat in the *Iliad*.

Homer, indeed, introduces the duel between *Hector* and *Ajax* with unexampled sublimity: but when the combatants meet, how soon is the conflict over, and how little are the readers kept in suspense!

Tasso has imitated this combat, with its attendant circumstances; and however he may fall short of his great original in some parts, he certainly has the advantage with respect to such particulars as tend to aggrandize the valour of his heroes.

I shall produce one more instance from Homer to support the foregoing assertion. When the mind has been long prepared for an engagement between the two great heroes of the poem, how must the expectation be excited from the idea of such a combat! But here, I

believe, every unprejudiced reader will confess his disappointment, where Hector is represented flying at the mere sight of Achilles; and when, after having been thrice chased round the walls of Troy, he turns, at the instigation of Pallas, to engage his enemy, how little appears the prowess of the gallant Hector, who had so often stood the bulwark of his country; of that Hector who, notwithstanding the united efforts of an army, had set fire to the Grecian fleet, and whom the poet had opposed to Neptune himself!

The last combat of Tancred and Argantes in the xixth book of the *Jerusalem*, excels every similar passage in the *Iliad* or *Æneid*: in the Italian poet the mind is kept in suspense for the event; and the several turns of fortune, between the two combatants, are well imagined: at the same time it must be confessed, that Tasso has not always shewn equal judgment: he has sometimes, through a partial reverence for the examples of antiquity, followed his Greek master to a fault; amongst other instances, the death of Solyman by the hand of Rinaldo, in the xxth book, must in some sort offend the reader, like that of Hector by Achilles.

If we peruse Ariosto attentively, we shall find him free from every objection of this kind: his great art, in these rencounters, is to keep up the attention between hope and fear, and when he has involved the reader in distress for the danger of some favourite warrior, he, by an unexpected turn, relieves the anxiety he has raised, and gives victory to the seemingly conquered party.

Nor will our poet be found deficient in the tender and pathetic, which every reader of taste must acknowledge, when he peruses the stories of Zerbino and Brandimart,

the episode of Cloridan and Medoro, and more especially the detail of Orlando's madness in the *xxiii*d Book, wherein the author has displayed the most intimate acquaintance with the human heart.

From the general plan of Ariosto's fable, which admits the agency of necromancers, witches, spirits, and other preternatural powers, it will be easily expected, that the marvellous should be carried to an excessive length; and yet many of his fictions are not more incredible than those of the Greek and Latin poets. The metamorphosis of the ships to nymphs, in the *Æneid*, is as violent a machine as the leaves to ships in the Orlando. The stories of the Italian poet are not more extravagant, than the legendary tales of the saints, which were currently believed in his time, and are still objects of faith with the vulgar. Yet let it not be supposed, that this apology for Ariosto, which respects the times in which he wrote, is meant as a general defence for such kind of fictions, critically, or even poetically considered, for some of these the warmest of Ariosto's admirers must give up as not to be defended.

Yet, while we candidly allow the force of objection to such passages of Ariosto as are justly reprehensible, let us not adopt the fastidious pedantry of those French critics, who, having little taste for the works of imagination of other nations, and no examples of such in their own, were continually declaiming against the false style, extravagant conceits, and absurd fictions, of the Italian poets, principally Ariosto and Tasso. Father Bouhours, in many respects an excellent and judicious critic, has undoubtedly produced several exceptionable passages in their writings; but has too hastily given the following

most extraordinary censure of Ariosto : “ * De l'humeur dont vous êtes (repliqua Phalante) vous n'approuveriez pas ce que dit l'Arioste d'un de ses heros, qui dans la chaleur du combat, ne s'étant pas apperçu qu'on l'avoit tué, il combattit toujours vaillamment tout mort qu'il étoit.”

Il pover' huomo, ed non s'en era accorto,
Andava combattendo ed era morto †.

This criticism, with the quotation, undoubtedly made from memory, has been implicitly taken up by many, and produced as an example of the absurdity of the Italian poets in general, and of Ariosto in particular: but the truth is, no such lines are to be found in the whole poem of Orlando Furioso, nor was Ariosto capable of a fiction so truly ridiculous, as only to deserve a place in a burlesque composition. The passage that gave rise to this remark of Father Bouhours is in Berni's *Rifacimento* of Boyardo, and is entirely his own, there being not the least foundation for it in the original work in Boyardo. The whole stanza runs thus:

Onde ora avendo a traverso tagliato
Questo Pagan, lo fe sì destramente,
Che l'un pezzo in su l'altro suggellato
Rimase, senza muoversi niente :
E come avvien', quand uno è rescaldato,
Che le ferite per allor non sente,
Così colui del colpo non accorto,
Andava combattendo ed era morto.

Orland. Inam. L. ii. C. xxiv. S. 60.

* Maniere de bien penser.

† The poor man, not perceiving what had happened to him, went on fighting, and he was dead.

He with his falchion aim'd so well the blow,
And sever'd with such art the Pagan foe,
That still, as one, the separate parts adher'd,
And still, entire, unhurt, the man appear'd :
And as the limbs, while warm in action, feel
No sense of anguish from the wounding steel ;
So the fierce knight, with vigour yet unbroke,
Fought on, tho' dead, unconscious of the stroke.

The champion who gave this wonderful stroke was Orlando, with his sword Durindana.

But if we consider that part of Ariosto's fable, which, independent of supernatural agents and visionary beings, exhibits merely a view of general manners so totally repugnant to the present system of political and social life, we shall find the picture much nearer than we imagined to the early times of feudal violence and oppression; and with respect to many descriptions in those writers, who are generally supposed to give us a world of their own creation, I beg to quote the following passage:

“ The fictions of the Gothic romances were not so remote from credibility as they are now thought. In the full prevalence of the feudal institution, when violence desolated the world, and every baron lived in a fortress, forests and castles were regularly succeeded by each other, and the adventurer might very suddenly pass from the gloom of woods, or the ruggedness of moors, to seats of plenty, gaiety, and magnificence. Whatever is imaged in the wildest tale, if giants, dragons, and enchantments be excepted, would be felt by him, who, wandering in the mountains without a guide, or upon the sea without a pilot, should be carried amidst

his terror and uncertainty to the hospitality and elegance of Raasay and Dunvegan *."

The same writer, having described the nature of the castles and fortified places, formerly in use in the islands of Scotland, proceeds thus: "These castles afford another evidence, that the fictions of romantic chivalry had, for their basis, the real manners of the feudal times, when every lord of a seignory lived in his hold lawless and unaccountable, with all the licentiousness and insolence of uncontested superiority and unprincipled power. The traveller, whoever he might be, coming to the fortified habitation of a chieftain, would probably have been interrogated from the battlements, admitted with caution at the gate, introduced to a petty monarch, fierce with habitual hostility, and vigilant with ignorant suspicion; who, according to his general temper, or accidental humour, would have seated a stranger as his guest at the table, or as a spy confined him to the dungeon.†"

The characters of Ariosto are powerfully delineated, and admirably sustained; and however he may offend in the probability of his action, his pictures of the affections of the mind have the clearest historical truth. Let the reader of imagination, and only such readers are qualified to taste the beauties of Ariosto, when he opens his book, allow him in full force the ideas of chivalry and magic, and he will find infinite touches of nature in the manners of his heroes and heroines, with a discrimination and variety rarely to be excelled.

* A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, p. 174.

† Ibid. p. 364.

“ Ariosto (says a late writer) pleases ; but not by his monstrous and improbable fictions, by his bizarre mixture of the serious and comic styles, by the want of coherence in his stories, or by the continual interruptions in his narration. He charms by the force and clearness of his expression, by the readiness and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the passions, especially of the gay and amorous kind*.”

No one seems to have been more powerfully impressed with the merits of Ariosto than an elegant poet of our own time, who, in taking a review of the several epic writers, where, in a most spirited manner, he asserts the superiority of genius and fancy over rule and system, has characterised the author of *Orlando Furioso* in the following animated lines :

Indignant Fancy, who with scorn survey'd
The sleepy honours to proud System paid,
Smiling to see that on her rival's brow
The poppy lurks beneath the laurel bough,
Resolv'd in sportive triumph to display
The rich extent of her superior sway:
From Necromancy's hand, in happiest hour,
She caught the rod of visionary power;
And, as aloft the magic wand she rais'd,
A peerless Bard, with new effulgence blaz'd,
Born every law of system to disown,
And rule by Fancy's boundless power alone.
High in mid air, between the moon and earth,
The Bard of pathos now, and now of mirth,
Pois'd with his lyre between a griffin's wings,
Her sportive darling Ariosto sings.
As the light cloud, whose varying vapours fly,
Driven by the zephyr of the evening sky,
Fixes and charms the never-wearied view,
By taking every shape and every hue;
So, by Variety's supreme controul,
His changeful numbers charm the willing soul:

* Hume, Dissertation iv.

Enchanted by his song, Attention sits,
 With features catching every cast by fits,
 Life the fond infant, in whose tender brain
 Young Sensibility delights to reign;
 While rapid Joy and Pain each other chase,
 Through the soft muscles of its April face.
 In vain the slaves of System would discard
 From Glory's classic train this airy bard;
 Delighted Nature her gay favourite crown'd,
 And Envy's clamour in her plaudit drown'd.
 Severe Morality, to censure mov'd,
 His wanton lyre with juster blame reprov'd;
 But his sweet song her anger so beguil'd,
 That ere she finish'd her reproof, she smil'd.

Haley's Essay on Ep. Poet. Ep. iii.

But whatever may be the power of Ariosto in the original, a translator will find great difficulties; and considerable liberties are to be allowed him, if he is expected to make his author graceful to an English reader. The great praise of Ariosto, amongst the intelligent of his countrymen, is simplicity of expression, and purity of diction; and it is universally allowed, that no author had ever a more absolute command of his own language. There is a certain easy negligence in his muse that often assumes a playful mode of expression, incompatible with the nature of our present poetry, though some few examples of the kind may be met with in our old poets, particularly Spenser, who has adopted much of Ariosto's manner. To this it may be added, that the Italian appears to run into rhyme with a facility altogether unknown to us, which may be seen from what has been related of Pulci, on which subject I shall give a remarkable passage from Mr. Baretti, in the book before quoted.

“ Among the general characteristics of the Tuscans, I have already touched upon their love of poetry; and,

what is altogether singular in them, their common custom of *improvisare*; that is, of singing verses extempore to the guitar, and other stringed instruments. I can aver that it is a very great entertainment, and what cannot fail of exciting very great surprise, to hear two of their best *improvisatori et cantare pures et respondere parati*, and eager to excel, expatiate in ottava rima, upon any subject moderately susceptible of poetical amplification. Several times have I been astonished at the rapidity of their expressions, the easiness of their rhymes, the justness of their numbers, the copiousness of their images, and the general warmth and impetuosity of their thoughts; and I have seen crowds of listeners hurried, as well as myself, into a vortex of delight, if I may so express it, whose motion acquired more and more violence as the bards grew more and more inflamed by the repeated shoutings of the by-standers, and by the force of the opposition, which each encountered from his antagonist."

It is this ease, blended with occasional strength, that gives unspeakable grace and variety to the narratives of Ariosto; and an English translator will have frequent reason to regret the more rigid genius of his language, that rarely permits him, in this respect, to attempt even an imitation of his author. It will therefore be found, upon comparing this version with the original, that some parts are shortened, and that the style of others has been varied, retaining, at the same time, what was thought requisite to preserve the character of the writer, for which reason I have not omitted the puerile conceits at the end of his books, as they do not in the least affect the general merit of the work.

Concerning the compliments to the house of Este, which occur in different parts of the poem, I have endeavoured to take off from the dryness of the subject, by giving in the notes a concise account of the Italian history and families alluded to. But there is a heavy charge against Ariosto, to which no defence can be made; which is, that he sometimes gives himself up to an unwarrantable licentiousness of idea and language: however, it is hoped, that every passage of this nature, is so far softened in the translation, as to give no just cause of offence.

As the far greater part of my readers must be supposed unacquainted with the work on which this poem is immediately founded, I have thought it expedient to prefix to the *Furioso* a general view of Boyardo's principal story, as connected with Ariosto, and to insert in the notes an account of every adventure referred to in the former poem.

The reader will observe that Ariosto generally breaks off his stories abruptly, after the manner of Boyardo, and other romantic writers, in which practice he has been followed by Spenser. Some Italian writers have applauded this method, as tending to excite and keep up the attention, and prevent satiety, by a continual variation of the subject; as the poet himself says:

“ Come raccende il gusto il mutare esca;
Così mi par, che la mia istoria, quanto,
Or quà, or là piu variata, sia,
Meno, a chi l'udirà noisa sia.”

“ As at the board, with plenteous viands grac'd,
Cate after cate excites the sickening taste;
So while my muse repeats her vary'd strains,
Tale following tale the ravish'd ear detains.”

Book xiii.

But perhaps the generality of readers will, with *Gravina**, be rather disgusted to have their curiosity so frequently raised, and almost as constantly disappointed, and that, sometimes, in the most critical and interesting part: it is likewise to be feared that these repeated breaks, by blending the adventures with each other, must rather tend to perplex and embarrass the story; though we cannot but admire the art of the poet, in connecting such an immense variety of incidents, and bringing them at last to one point. I have, therefore, set down the several continuations, after the example of the Italian editors, which method has likewise been pursued by Sir John Harington in his translation.

It will be proper, in this place, to say something of the five cantos printed after Ariosto's death, in addition to the forty-six cantos of the *Orlando Furioso*, and concerning which there have been different opinions amongst his own countrymen of the intention of the poet. Some have supposed that they were meant to have been incorporated with his great work; but such opinion must surely be erroneous, since the first of these additional cantos opens after Rogero had been converted to Christianity, and was made one of the Paladins of Charlemain, circumstances that certainly point out the conclusion of the *Furioso*. Others have, with much more reason, judged these five cantos to be the beginning of an entire new work, continued from the subject of the former: and by some writers, amongst whom is *Porcacchi*, it has been doubted whether these cantos were the genuine production of Ariosto, to whom, however,

* See page 18.

the generality of his biographers, without scruple, give them; but it seems to be agreed by all, that they are very inferior in composition and elegance of style to his celebrated poem; nor are they ever quoted or referred to by any writer, as so frequently happens with respect to the *Furioso*. Some have thought that they were the work of his earlier years. It is certain that the fable appears very uninteresting after a perusal of the *Furioso*, and the fiction most absurdly extravagant, where he brings Rogero into the belly of a whale, when he meets with a hermit, who had been there forty years, and who relates to him, that all who had escaped from Alcina, were sooner or later imprisoned in this monster. Here he meets with Astolpho, and sees a church and dwelling for the inhabitants, all in the belly of the whale. On considering these five posthumous cantos, in which the story is brought to no conclusion, I am almost tempted to subscribe to the following judicious sentiments of Sir John Harington: "For the five cantos that follow *Furioso*, I am partly of opinion they were not his, both because methinke they differ in sweetnesse of style from the other, and beside it is not likely that a man of his judgment, having made so absolute a piece of worke as his *Furioso* is, and having brought every matter to a great and well-pleasing conclusion, would, as it were, marre all again, and set them all by the ears, and bring Rogero in the whale's belly, and Astolpho with him for company, that a little before were conquerors of the world*."

* Harington's *Life of Ariosto*.

If novelty be any recommendation of the work now offered to the public, an English Ariosto may have that to plead, notwithstanding any translation that has yet appeared. We have indeed two versions of the Orlando Furioso, the first of which, by Sir John Harington, before-mentioned, published in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and dedicated to that Princess, is little known; the copies are become very scarce, and the genius of the performance, whatever merit it might claim at the time of the publication, affords now little encouragement to multiply them by a new impression. The last translation, sent into the world, was professedly given by its author as a literal version, the very idea of which will necessarily exclude the thought of its being generally read as an English book, of which every one will judge, who is acquainted with the different idioms of the two languages.

Although this poem, like all the Italian writings of the kind, is written in the octave stanza, the present translation will be found, in that respect, to differ from the two first, which are rendered in the same form of versification as the Italian. I am aware that it has been, and is still, the opinion of some, whose judgment claims no little deference, that the English couplet is improper for a work of this nature, and that the stanza is the only manner suitable to romance: to which it may be answered that the Italians, who made use of the first, applied it, and still continue to apply it, to the highest kind of poetry; it is therefore to be considered as their heroic style: It was not only used by Pulci, Boyardo, and Ariosto, in their compositions of the Gothic fiction, but is employed by Tasso in his truly Epic poem of the

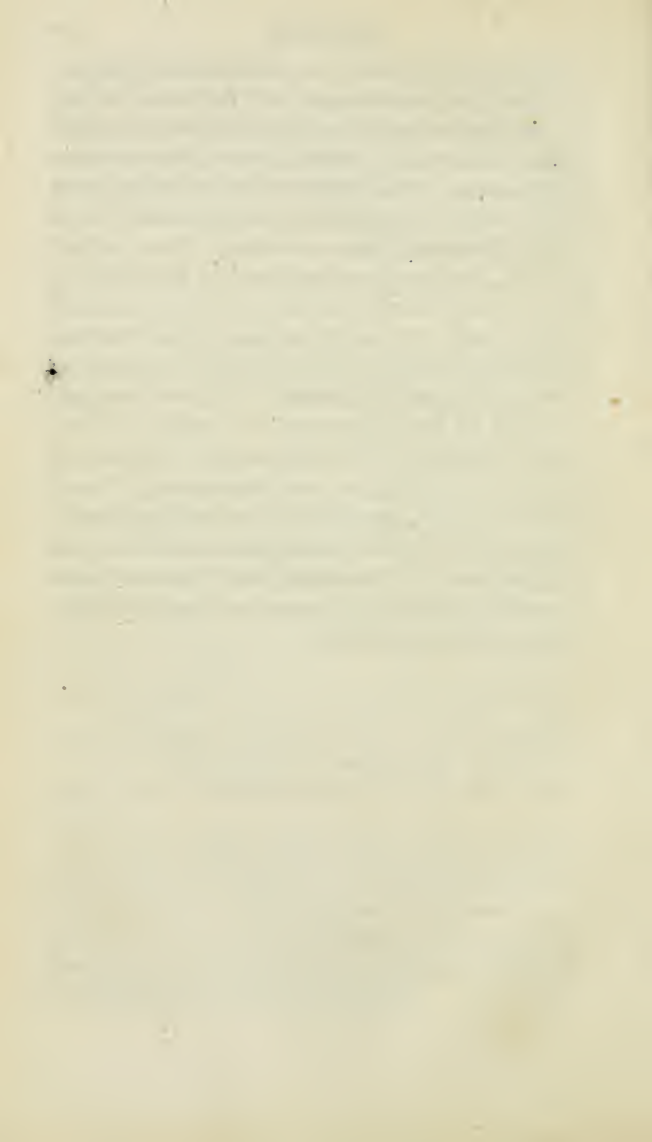
Jesrusalem; and by many of the Italian writers in their translations of the Greek and Roman poets, which, I believe, few other modern translators would think of rendering in the stanza. The genius of our heroic verse admits of a great variety; and we have examples of very different species of writing in the works of Dryden and Pope; from the sublime style of Homer and Virgil, to the familiar narratives of Boccace and Chaucer.

But of all the various styles used by our best poets, none seems so well adapted to the mixed and familiar narrative as that of Dryden in his last productions, known by the name of his Fables, which, by their harmony, spirit, ease, and variety of versification, exhibit an admirable model for a translator of Ariosto.

In referring to the several commentators, I have been cautious how far I adopted their allegorical interpretations, as the temper of that class of writers frequently leads them to trace out a meaning which the poet himself was a stranger to: that allegory, which requires explanation, is certainly defective; and it is notorious, that an inventive genius can convert the plainest narrative into mystery, as Tasso has done by his Jerusalem, to which he has prefixed an allegory that renders the whole poem as completely visionary as the Fairy Queen of Spenser.

Should the English reader become more acquainted with this celebrated Italian, he will find the Orlando no bad elucidation of the Don Quixote of Cervantes, as a great part of the customs, at least the general genius of chivalry, may be learnt from it, without the drudgery of travelling through the old romances.

Though it is not here recommended that any one should imitate the extravagances of the Italian writers, yet while the enthusiastic spirit, that hurries away the reader, continues to be regarded as the glorious criterion of true poetry, every follower of the Muses will find ample subject for admiration in the perusal of the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, an author, whom, with all his faults, Dryden acknowledges to have been a GREAT POET; an author, lately included in the highest praise of creative genius by one of our first critics, who thus describes that general effect from which the power of every poet ought to be estimated. “ Works of imagination excel by their allurements and delight; by their power of attracting and detaining attention. That book is good in vain which the reader throws away. He only is the master who keeps the mind in pleasing captivity; whose pages are perused with eagerness, and in hope of new pleasure are perused again; and whose conclusion is perceived with an eye of sorrow, such as the traveller casts upon departing day.”



THE
LIFE OF ARIOSTO:

EXTRACTED FROM

PIGNA, FORNARI, GARAFOLO, MAZZUCHELLI,
AND OTHERS.

SOME authors, though with little authority, maintain, that the Ariosti derive their original from the Aristi, or Ariovisti: it is, however, certain that this family was very ancient in Bologna, where it had flourished in great estimation, when Obizzo III. marquis of Este, married Lippa Ariosta, a lady of excellent beauty and rare accomplishments, who, accompanying her husband to Ferrara, took with her several of her relations, and first established the house of the Ariosti in that place.

Among other branches of the name, lived Nicolo and his brothers, men of great consideration in Ferrara: Nicolo not only filled, under Hercules and Borso, dukes of Ferrara, the most important posts in the city, but was chosen to the government of Rheggio and Modena, and several times sent ambassador to the pope, the emperor, and the king of France: but nothing contributed more to deliver his name down to posterity, than being the Father of Ludovico.

While he was in the government of Rheggio, in Lombardy, he espoused Daria de Malaguzzi, a lady of wealth and family, descended from one of the first houses in Rheggio. By this marriage he had five sons, Ludovico, Gabriele, Carlo, Galasso, and Alessandro; and the same number of daughters. Ludovico was born on the eighth of September, in the year 1474, in the fortress of Rheggio, where his father was governor; as Galasso and Alessandro were born while he was in the government of Modena. These sons were all well accomplished, and, for their many excellent qualities, patronised by several princes. Gabriele gave himself up to literary pursuits, and is said to have arrived at great excellence in Latin poetry, but to have been too close an imitator of Statius: he died at Ferrara. Carlo, who was of a disposition more inclined to dissipation and gaiety, led the life of a courtier, and died at the court of Naples. Galasso embraced the profession of the church, was employed in several important offices, and, at last, ended his days, ambassador from the duke of Ferrara, at the court of Charles V. Alessandro, who was of an inquisitive and enterprising genius, having spent great part of his time in visiting foreign countries, at last finished his life in Ferrara.

To return to Ludovico, the subject of our present inquiry; as he was the first-born of his father's children, so he is reported to have surpassed the rest in the endowments of the mind; giving, from his tender years, uncommon presage of a future genius. Being yet in his rudiments, he composed a kind of tragedy from the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, which he caused to be represented by his brothers and sisters.

He applied himself very early to the study of the Latin, in which he made greater progress than almost any one of his age; and, in the very beginning of his studies, he composed and recited an elegant oration in that language, which gave the highest expectations of him. Tito Strozza, a man of great learning and consummate knowledge, took particular delight to hear him, and to propose difficult questions for his solution; often encouraging a dispute, on literary subjects, between him and Hercules his son, a youth whose age and studies agreed with Ariosto.

But it happened to our Poet, as to Ovid, Petrarch, Tasso, and others, that his father Nicolo, having little taste for literature, and therefore disinclined to encourage his son in pursuing the bent of his genius, was rather desirous, that, as his eldest-born, he should endeavour to establish his fortune in the world, by taking some lucrative profession; and sent him to Padua, to apply himself to the study of the Civil Law, under Angelo Castrinse and Il Maino; in which employment he spent five years, highly disagreeable to one of his disposition: which circumstance he laments in one of his satires addressed to Bembo.

Ahi lasso! quando ebbi al Pegaseo melo
 L'età disposta, e che le fresche guancie
 Non si vedeano ancor fiorir du'n pelo;
 Mio padre mi cacciò con spiedi e lancie,
 (Non che con sproni) a volger testi e chiose;
 E m'occupò cinque anni in quelle ciancie.

Ere yet my cheeks were fledg'd with rising down,
 When, smit with love of verse, I sought renown
 On sweet Parnassus' hill; my sire's command
 Compell'd me to forsake that happy land,
 And chain'd me five long years to hear disputes
 Of brawling lawyers and litigious suits.

Satire vi.

So Ovid complains that his father compelled him to study the law : De Tristibus, Lib. iv. Eleg. x.

At mihi jam puero cœlestia sacra placebant,
Inque suum furtim Musa trahebat opus.
Sæpè Pater dixit, Studium quid inutile tentas ?
Mœonides nullas ipse reliquit opes.
Motus eram dictis : totoque Helicone relicto,
Scribere conabar verba soluta modis.
Sponte suâ carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod tentabam dicere, versus erat.

While yet a boy, sweet verse my genius fir'd ;
The secret Muse her pleasing task inspir'd.
My sire oft cry'd, This useless trade give o'er ;
For Homer left behind no golden store.
Mov'd at his words, I Pindus' hill resign'd,
And strove to write, by metre unconfin'd :
In vain—the Muse spontaneous verse bestow'd,
And all I wrote in tuneful numbers flow'd.

Milton, in like manner, desires his father to let him pursue the Muses :

Tu, tamen, ut simules teneras odisse Camœnas
Non odisse reor ; neque enim, pater, ire jubebas
Quâ via lata patet, quâ pronior area lucri,
Certaque condendi fulget spes aurea nummi :
Nec rapis ad leges, malè custoditaque gentis
Jura, nec insulsis damnas clamoribus aures.

Ad Patrem.

Thou canst not sure the gentle Muses hate,
Or bid me change, O sire ! my peaceful state,
To tread the sordid paths, that open lies
To fields of wealth, where golden harvests rise.
Thou wilt not force me to th' ungrateful bar,
Where ill-kept laws supply the constant jar ;
Or fix me there, long tedious days, to hear
Those sounds of discord to a poet's ear.

But although Ariosto durst not openly disobey his father, he could not so far conquer his inclinations, but that, during the course of this time, he found leisure to peruse many authors, particularly French and Spanish

romances, with which languages he was well acquainted, having translated two or three of these authors himself into his native tongue; of which kind of performances he availed himself in his future works, making use of every beauty that occurred in these wild productions of imagination. Nicolo, at last, perceiving the aversion his son had to the profession of the law, and the little progress he made therein, resolved no longer to combat his desires, but permit him to obey the strong propensity of genius, which evidently pointed to what Nature had designed him. This indulgence of Nicolo is said to have been, in a great degree, owing to the good offices of Pandolfo Ariosto, a youth of excellent endowments, and a near kinsman to Ludovico.

Ludovico, being now left at liberty, applied himself with unwearied assiduity to recover the advantages he had necessarily lost. He had now put himself, at the age of twenty, under the tuition of Gregorio de Spoleti, a person of admirable taste, and well versed in the Latin and Greek tongues, who then resided in the family of Rinaldo of Este, at Ferrara. Gregorio, observing the avidity with which Ariosto applied himself to study, took every possible care to cultivate his genius; and, by his instructions, his pupil soon made himself master of the most excellent Latin authors, particularly the poets, among whom Horace appears to have been his favourite. He explained many difficult and obscure parts in that author, which were never before understood. His intention was, in like manner, to have gone through a course of Greek literature; but as he was first desirous of perfecting himself in the Latin, he suddenly lost the assistance of his preceptor Gregorio, who was constrained

to take a journey into France, at the desire of Isabella, daughter to Alphonso of Naples, as tutor to her son; where he soon after died, to the inexpressible grief of Ariosto.

About the same time died Nicolo Ariosto, the father of Ludovico, leaving behind him a numerous offspring. Ariosto, then only twenty-four years of age, found himself at once involved in the cares of a family, and obliged to take upon himself the management of domestic concerns, to introduce his brothers into the world, provide fortunes for his sisters, and, in every respect, supply to them the place of a father, who had left them but a very slender patrimony.

Mi more il padre e da Maria il pensiero
 Drieto a Marta bisogna ch'io rivolga,
 Chi'o muti in squarci e in vacchette Omero;
 Trovi marito e modo che si tolga
 Di casa una sorella e un' altra appresso,
 E che' l'eredita non se ne dolga:
 Co' piccioli fratelli a' qual successo
 Ero in luoco di padre far l'uffizio
 Che debito e pietà m' avea commesso.

My father dead, I took the father's part,
 And chang'd for household cares the Muse's art;
 For tuneful verse, each thoughtful hour I spent,
 To husband well the little heaven had sent:
 Each sister claim'd, by turns, my guardian hand,
 To watch their youth, and form their nuptial band:
 While piety and love my heart engage,
 To rear my helpless brethren's tender age.

Satire vi.

He was now so wholly engrossed by a multiplicity of cares, as not only to give over his intended prosecution of the Greek language, but almost to abandon the Latin, which he had but lately recovered, had not Pandolfo Ariosto so far stimulated him, that he still continued,

in some degree, his studies; till death deprived him of so pleasing a companion. Yet all these disappointments did not so much damp the vigour of his genius, but that he gave signal proofs of an excellent vein of poetry. He had now attained the age of twenty-nine years, and had acquired an uncommon reputation for his Latin verses, and numerous poems and sonnets full of spirit and imagination. His conversation was coveted by men of the greatest learning and abilities; insomuch that Cardinal Hippolito of Este, whose court was a receptacle for the most admired personages of the age, received him into his service, where he continued fifteen years; during which time, his mind being always intent on the muses, he formed a design of writing a poem of the romance kind; in which no one had yet written with the dignity of which the subject was capable. The happy versatility of his genius was such, that he could equally adapt himself to every species of poetry; and an Italian writer of his life observes, that whatever he wrote, seemed, at the time, to be his particular study.

At about thirty years of age, he began his Orlando; and Cardinal Bembo, to whom he communicated his design, would have dissuaded him from writing in Italian, advising him to cultivate the Latin; to which Ariosto answered, that he would rather be the first among the Tuscan writers, than scarcely the second among the Latin. At the same time, it fortunately happened, that he had already written some stanzas of his Orlando; which communicating to several of his friends, he met with such encouragement, that he determined vigorously to prosecute his design. It may be here observed, that Dante, at first, intended to have written his poem in

Latin; and actually composed some initial lines in that language.

He chose the subject of Boyardo, which was well known to all; and being left unfinished, had strongly excited the reader's curiosity to see the end of a story so artfully begun. In the same manner, Virgil, of whom Ariosto appears a great imitator, formed his *Æneid* as a kind of sequel to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. And it may be remarked, that by adopting the fictions of Boyardo, Ariosto had not only an opportunity of bringing the romance of the Count to a conclusion, but of celebrating, under the person of Rogero, the family of his patron.

Ariosto had proposed to write a poem in terza rima* (like Dante), in praise of the House of Este, different from the *Furioso*; but not being satisfied with the work, he laid it aside, and pursued the design of his *Furioso*, in ottava rima. The intended poem began thus:

Cantero l'armi, cantero 'gli affanni
D'amor, che un cavalier sottenne gravi
Peregrinando in terra e in mar molt' anni, &c.

I sing of arms, and sing the pains of love,
And all the toils a suffering hero bore,
Long destin'd far o'er land and sea to rove, &c.

In order to pursue his studies with less interruption, he chose the situation of Rheggio, retiring to a pleasant villa, belonging to Sigismundo Malaguzzi, his kinsman, where he spent his leisure in the prosecution of his

* Of this terza rima of the Italians, the English reader will have a full idea, from the three cantos of the *Inferno* of Dante, translated with wonderful spirit and fidelity by Mr. Hayley, notwithstanding the confinement and difficulty of the metre. See Essay on Epic poetry, Note to Epistle iii.

principal design. In one of his satires he gives the following agreeable sketch of his retreat:

Gia mi fur' dolci inviti a empir le carte
 I luoghi ameni, di che il nostro Rheggio
 Il natio nido mio n'ha la sua parte:
 Il tuo Mauritian sempre vagheggio
 La bella stanza, e 'l Rodano vicino,
 Da le Naiade amato ombroso seggio:
 Il lucido vivaio, onde il giardino
 Si cinge intorno, il fresco rio che corre
 Rigando l'erbe, ove poi fa il molino.
 Non mi si po de la memoria torre
 Le vigni, e i solchi del secondo Iacco,
 Le valle e' l colle e la ben posta torre.

Blest be the time, when from the world retir'd,
 Fair Rheggio's peaceful scenes my muse inspir'd:
 Nurse of my infant years! Remembrance views
 Thy pleasing seats, and every charm renews:
 I see where Rhodan's tide delightful flows,
 While sportive Naiads on the banks repose;
 The fishy pool, with silver lustre crown'd,
 Whose dimpled water moats the garden round;
 The living stream that pours a crystal rill
 Thro' sprinkled herbage to the neighbouring mill;
 The clustering vines, that yield their purple store;
 The hills, the vales, and ivy-circled tower.

Satire iv.

While he was busied in these literary pursuits, Alphonso, duke of Ferrara, having occasion to send ambassadors to Rome, in order to appease the anger of Pope Julius II. who prepared to make war against him, was, by his brother the cardinal, recommended to Ariosto, as a proper person to be entrusted with such a negotiation. The duke, therefore, made choice of him; and he acquitted himself so well in his commission, that he returned with an answer much more favourable than was expected. However, the Pope, still continuing at enmity with the duke, made a league with the Venetians, and

collected a powerful army against Ferrara : but he gained little honour in this enterprise, being defeated at the battle of Ravenna. Part of a fleet was sent up the Po, against Ferrara ; but met with a repulse from the duke's party. In this engagement, Ariosto, who was present, behaved with great courage, and took one of the largest of the enemy's vessels, filled with stores and ammunition.

The papal army being dispersed, Alphonso thought it adviseable to send an ambassador again to Rome. But every one being afraid to engage in his service, knowing the Pope's disposition, he dispatched Ludovico a second time, who found his Holiness so incensed against the duke, that his indignation was very near shewing itself to the ambassador; and it was not without difficulty that Ariosto escaped with life to Ferrara.

The duke's affairs being established, Ariosto returned to his studies; though, continuing still in the service of the cardinal, he was employed, at times, in various public occupations, that often broke in upon his retirement, and obliged him to defer the completion of his *Orlando*. However, he found means to steal so much leisure from his more serious employments, that he at last brought it to a conclusion : and though the work was far from having that perfection which he himself desired, yet, in order to avail himself of the general opinion of the public, he was determined to give it to the world; and accordingly caused it to be first printed in the year 1515.

Some time after, the cardinal having a design to go into Hungary, was desirous of being accompanied by the ingenious men who lived under his patronage: but

Ariosto openly declared his inclination to be left behind; for, being now afflicted with a catarrh, he was fearful of the consequences from the fatigues and inconveniences of so long a journey. Besides, the service of the cardinal began to grow very irksome to him; those, who were about him, being frequently obliged to watch the greatest part of the night. It appears, likewise, that Ariosto was in his nature averse to travelling, and had visited few countries.

Delgi uomini son varii gli appetiti,
 A chi piace la chiesa, a chi la spada,
 A chi la patria, a chi gli strani liti.
 Chi vuol andare a torno, a torno vada,
 Vegga Inghilterra, Ungheria, Francia, e Spagna,
 A me piace habitar la mia contrada.
 Vist' ho' Toscana, Lombardia, Romania,
 Quel monte che divide, e quel che serra
 Italia e un mare, e l'altro che la bagna:
 Questo mi basta, il resto della terra,
 Senza mai pagar l'oste, andrò cercando
 Con Tolomeo sia 'l mondo in pace o in guerra.
 E tutto il mar senza far voti quando
 Lampeggi il ciel, sicuro in sulle carte
 Verro' più che su i legni volteggiando.

Various are men's pursuits; these seek renown
 In fields of death; those chuse the sacred gown:
 Some quit their native for a foreign shore:
 Let those, that wish, unnumber'd realms explore,
 To France, Hungary, Spain, and England roam,
 While I prefer a peaceful seat at home.
 I've view'd whate'er the Tuscan country yields,
 Fair Lombardy, and wide Romania's fields:
 The hills, that Italy from Spain divide,
 And those extending to the surging tide.
 Let this suffice—the rest I can survey,
 In peace or war—nor host nor captain pay;
 With Ptolemy can safely trace the seas,
 Nor need with vows and prayers the storms appease:
 Better on pictur'd charts secure to sail,
 Than in frail vessels dare the treacherous gale!

Satire iv.

The refusal of Ariosto to accompany the cardinal, so exasperated the prelate, that he, in a manner, withdrew his protection from him; which circumstance gave our Poet great uneasiness; though it is thought that Hippolito might have taken him again into favour, but for the ill offices of some malicious persons, who had the address to keep them at a distance from each other. On this difference between the cardinal and him, Ariosto strongly dwells in his satires.

A me per esser stato contumace
Di non veder Agria ne Buda,
Che si ritaglia il sua gia non mi spiace.

I murmur not, to think my patron's hand
Resum'd the grace my service once obtain'd;
Since I refus'd to quit Italia's shores,
To visit Agria's * walls, and Buda's * towers.

And afterwards:

Che senza fede e senza amor mi nome
E che dimostri con parole e cenai
Ch' in odio, ch' in dispetto habbia il mio nome.

Still let him, at his will, my faith reprove,
And tax me still with breach of loyal love;
With every word and deed to all proclaim
His settled hatred of my hapless name!

The only consolation Ludovico had, was the leading a retired life, which suited his disposition far more than the continual bustle of a court. He now applied himself, without interruption, to give every improvement to his Orlando; and, in the year 1521, published another edition of it, with further corrections.

In the mean time, cardinal Hippolito died; and Ariosto, who for fifteen years lived in a state of uneasy

* Two towns in Hungary.

dependence, and had now reached the forty-fourth year of his age, was determined never more to be connected with a court: but being closely persuaded by his intimate friend Buonoventura Pistofolo, secretary to Alphonso, he engaged in the service of that prince, from whom he met with a most gracious and affectionate reception.

Not long after, when Adrian II. succeeded to the papal chair, Grafagnana, a province on the Apennine, being torn to pieces by factions, augmented by the licentiousness into which the people had degenerated, from a total remissness of government, it was judged necessary to appoint a person, whose prudence and authority might reduce them to a due subjection. For this important trust Ariosto was chosen, who, though very averse to the journey, would not again hazard incurring the displeasure of his patron.

Ludovico continued three years in his new government, in which he acquitted himself so well, that he not only brought the people to a proper sense of their duty to their sovereign, but entirely gained their affections to himself; and was highly applauded by the duke for his good services. An extraordinary instance is here given of the veneration paid to his character by all ranks and degrees of men: At his first coming to the government, having occasion one day to cross a wood, with about six horsemen in his company, he was obliged to pass through a number of armed men, who, from their appearance, gave great cause of suspicion; the country being, at that time, all round greatly infested with robbers, the most formidable of whom were headed by Dominico Maroco and Filippo Pacchione. Ariosto had scarcely got clear of this troop, before-mentioned, when

the captain demanded of one of the servants, that happened to be behind the rest, who the stranger was, and being told it was Ludovico Ariosto, he immediately ran to overtake him, armed as he was. Ariosto, seeing him follow, stopped short, waiting with some anxiety for the end of this affair. His pursuer, coming up, saluted him with great respect; and, declaring that his name was Filippo Pacchione, begged pardon, that, not knowing him, he had suffered him to pass, without paying the respect due to his singular merit.

Mr. Baretti, in the preface to his *Italian Library*, relates this story, with different circumstances, in the following words; concluding with a reflection on the power of eloquence over savage minds, very apposite to the subject.

“ Among other striking instances of the people’s veneration for him, Ariosto had one of a very particular nature. The duke, his master, had sent him governor of Grafagnana, a province on the Apennine, whose inhabitants, seizing the opportunity of the general turbulences that were in Italy at that time, paid but little obedience to their sovereign. Ariosto took his residence in a fortified castle, from which it was imprudent to step out without guards, as the whole neighbourhood was swarming with outlaws, smugglers, and banditti, who, after committing the most enormous excesses all around, retired, for shelter against justice, amidst the rocks and cliffs. Ariosto, one morning, happened to take a walk without the castle, in his night-gown, and, in a fit of thought, forgot himself so much, that, step after step, he found himself very far from his habitation, and surrounded, on a sudden, by a troop of these desperadoes,

who certainly would have ill-used, and perhaps murdered him, had not his face been known by one of the gang, who, informing his comrades that this was Signor Ariosto, the chief of the banditti addressed him with intrepid gallantry, and told him, that since he was author of the *Orlando Furioso*, he might be sure none of the company would injure him; but would see him, on the contrary, safe back to the castle: and so they did, entertaining him all along the way with the various excellencies they had discovered in his poem, and bestowing upon it the most rapturous praises. A very rare proof of the irresistible powers of poetry; and a noble comment on the fables of Orpheus and Amphion, who drew wild beasts, and raised walls, with the enchanting sound of their lyres."

While Ariosto continued in the government of Gragnana, Buonoventura Pistofolo often proposed to him, by letter, to go as ambassador from the duke to Clement VII. who had been a great patron of our poet, setting before him the honours and advantages that would accrue from such an employ. But Ludovico gave little heed to these solicitations; his mind being altogether detached from the views of interest or ambition. His general answer was, "that he esteemed it better to enjoy a little in peace and tranquillity, than to seek after a great deal with fatigue and anxiety." Some relate, that he had a repugnance to live at a distance from his country, on account of a lady residing at Ferrara, for whom he had conceived a violent passion; and, indeed, he plainly acknowledges this himself, in his fourth Satire, to Annibale Malaguzzi.

Parmi vederti qui ridere e dire,
 Che non amor di patri nè di studi,
 Ma de donna cè cagion che non vogl'ire,
 Libero t'el confesso, or chindi
 La bocca -----

Methinks you smile, and cry--nor love of home,
 Nor study makes your friend averse to roam:
 But some fair dame--I own the guilt at large;
 Upbraid not him who triumphs in the charge.

The term of his government being expired, he returned to court, where, finding the duke took great delight in theatrical representations, he applied himself to the drama; and, besides the *Cassaria* and *Suppositi*, he composed *La Lena*, and *Il Negromante*, in prose and verse, and the *Scolastica* in verse; though the last was left imperfect by his death, and the fifth act added by his brother *Gabriele*. Of these comedies, four were first printed in prose, and afterwards turned into verse. They were performed with universal applause, before many families of rank; the actors being generally persons of condition: insomuch, that when the *Lena* was first acted, in 1523, Signor Don Francisco of Este, afterwards Marquis of Massa, spoke the prologue himself.

A remarkable anecdote is handed down, which shews how entirely his mind was, in the early part of his life, absorbed by his favourite studies. His father having taken some offence at the conduct of Ludovico, expostulated with him, one day, with uncommon warmth; to which his son listened without the least seeming notice, or returning any answer. *Nicolo* being gone, his brother *Gabriele*, who was with him, entered upon the same subject; to whom he gave such satisfactory reasons, as entirely removed every other objection that had been

brought against him. His brother then asking why he had not made use of the same arguments to his father, he replied, that, at that time he was considering whether the scene, which passed between them, might not be of use to him in a comedy he was then writing, called the *Cassaria*; that he thought his father would serve as an excellent model for an old man, whom he had introduced, on a like occasion, reproaching his son: concluding, that his thoughts were so engrossed by the fiction, that he had forgot the reality.

Another anecdote is told, relative to these comedies, which shews how totally the attention of the people in Italy was taken up with the merits and reputation of the *Orlando Furioso*. Ricoboni conceived a design of exhibiting the *Scolastica* of Ariosto on the stage at Venice; and public notice being given of the representation, the name of Ariosto drew together a prodigious concourse of spectators. But it unfortunately happened, few of them knew that this author had written comedies; and, before the piece began, Ricoboni was informed, that they had a notion the play was taken from the *Orlando Furioso*; and, when the performance came on, not seeing *Angelica*, *Orlando*, *Bradamant*, and the other personages of their favourite poem, they began to express their dissatisfaction; which increased to such a degree, that Ricoboni was obliged to drop the curtain at the end of the fourth act*.

Ariosto now appeared to lead a life of tranquillity; which was the more agreeable to him, as he was not so

* See Ricoboni.

deeply engaged by the duke, but that he had sufficient leisure to pursue his studies; the service of Alphonso being far more easy than that of Hippolito. About this time he published his Satires, besides those he had formerly written; in the whole, to the number of seven; till being again involved in family difficulties, and harassed with law-suits, he was obliged, for some time, to lay aside his compositions. At last, having brought his affairs to a happy crisis, he purchased a piece of ground opposite the church of St. Benedict, where he built a pretty commodious dwelling; which, some say, he was enabled to do by the liberality of the duke. He had a garden adjoining to this house, the usual scene of his poetical meditations. Here he passed the remainder of his life, as much as possible secluded from all public employments.

Having attained the 59th year of his age, he was seized, on the last day but one of the year 1532, with a lingering illness, though some say his illness first came upon him in October or November, about which time the ducal palace took fire, which accident consumed the superb theatre that had been built for the exhibition of his comedies; in the same year he had sent his *Furioso* to the press with his last improvements, corrected and enlarged as we now have it.

Some physicians attributed the cause of his malady to the custom he had of eating fast, and chewing his victuals little, that occasioned an indigestion; the means they made use of to remove this complaint, brought on a consumption, which, in spite of all the assistance of medicine, at last put a period to his life, at Ferrara, on the 6th of June, or, as others say, on the 8th of July, 1533.

Thus died Ludovico Ariosto, a man of uncommon eminence, whether we consider him as a member of the republic of society, or of the more extensive world of literature: as the first, he acquired the affection and esteem of persons of the highest consideration; he contracted the closest intimacy with the family of Medicis, and was beloved by Leo X. the Augustus of that age: as the second. he was one of the few great poets who see that reputation attend their works, during their lifetime, which continues to be transmitted down to posterity; and perhaps few books have been so often printed as the *Orlando*, which has passed through upwards of eighty editions, and not only been rendered into all the European languages, but is said to have found its way into every part of the world*. The uncommon popularity of this author may be further gathered from the numbers that have drawn their subjects from his original†.

Il Doni, an Italian writer, in a register of the manuscript works of several poets, has attributed two pieces to Ariosto, one called *RINALDO ARDITO*; and the other, *IL TERMINE DEL DESIDERIO*; neither of which appears to have been printed†. Besides the *XLVI* books of his *ORLANDO FURIOSO*, he left behind him five books on the same story, which were first printed in addition to the

* In the year 1756, a translation of the *Orlando Furioso* was made in Latin verse, by the Marquis Torquato Barbolani, a colonel of horse in the emperor's service.

† See Quadrio, List of Romanzatori, continuators and imitators of Ariosto.

‡ Mazzuchelli.

original poem in the year 1545, twelve years after Ariosto's death*.

An elegant sonnet was written by Nicolo Eugenico in his praise, which we shall here give the reader.

Porto gran tempo al mare altiero il corno
 Il Mincio, e sparso le sue arene d'oro
 Mentre che'l padre de Pierio Choro
 Fece nel grembo suo dolce soggiorno.
 Non men hor lieto, e d' egual' spoglie adorno
 Va'l Po, spargando il nuovo suo tesoro.
 Toi che cantando in lui cigno canoro
 Fa risonar le ricche sponde intorno.
 L'un perche irriga Mantoa, donde uscio
 Que ch' i fatti d' Enea piû che mortali
 Con stil divino a tutto 'l mondo aprio.
 L'altro Ferrara, onde i concetti eguali
 Spiegò chi l'opre di Ruggier scoprio
 Monstrandole ad ogn'un chiare immortali.

Long time had Mincius o'er his golden sand,
 Roll'd to the distant sea in kingly pride ;
 While the great father of the Muses' band,
 Held his fair dwelling near th' exulting tide.
 Not less elate, with equal honours crown'd,
 His treasure now triumphant Po can tell ;
 While, as our Swan his music pours around,
 Along the banks the notes sonorous swell,
 Mincius to Mantua's wall his current leads,
 Whence rose the bard, who blaz'd th' immortal deeds
 Of great Æneas, in his deathless lays :
 Po bathes Ferrara, whence the poet sprung,
 Whose equal muse Rogero's glories sung,
 And o'er the world diffus'd his lineal praise !

Several writers have affirmed, that he was solemnly crowned with laurel by the victorious Charles V. in the

* Among other productions that took their rise from the poem of Ariosto, Mazzuchelli tells us, that, in 1530, the whole poem was turned into a spiritual sense, and that Giulio Cesare Croce, in 1607, formed from it another work, on the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ.

city of Mantua, in the year 1532, for his ORLANDO FURIOSO; and this circumstance has been as positively denied by others. Mazzuchelli, in his Life of Ariosto, has considered the arguments on both sides; and observes, that the silence of those authors on the subject, who certainly would not have passed over such an event, may justly render the whole suspected; that, among others, surely little attention can be paid to the authority of one writer*, who relates that Ariosto had scarcely received the laurel crown, when, transported with joy, and inspired, as it were, with a poetical frenzy, he ran through the city apparently as mad as his own Orlando. Fornari speaks of the coronation; but Pigna and Garafolo make no mention of it. Il Signore Dottore Barotti thus examines the supposed fact. “Many have doubted of the coronation by Charles, and writers, who speak of it, do not agree upon the time or place: some say that the ceremony was performed at Mantua, and others at Bologna: some, that it happened in 1530, and others, in 1532; but, surely, it could not be in 1530, as the complete edition of the poem, with the praises of the emperor, was not published till 1532. In a manuscript book, delivered down for the hand-writing of his son Virginio, are these words: *E una baia che fosse coronato*. But, in a public instrument between his son Virginio and his brother, in October 1542, we read as follows: *Cum annis decursis animam egerit magnificus et LAUREATUS D. Ludovicus Areostus, &c.* both which, the manuscript book and instrument, are in my possession. In a letter of Galasso Ariosto it is said, that Ariosto had scarce

* Minchenio.

published the last edition of his work when he fell ill, and died after eight months. The publication was in October 1532, and it is difficult to suppose that he could be crowned in November, the time mentioned. Yet the epitaph, caused to be engraved by his nephew's son Ludovico, sets forth the coronation. If Pigna and Garafolo affirm that he fell ill in December, it may be understood that he then took to his bed; and as to the medal of Ariosto crown'd, nothing can be proved from that."

To this Mazzuchelli adds, that we may refer to the declaration of Franco, who asserts that he was not crowned; and concludes the argument, by opposing to all these, the authority of the exact Apostolo Zeno, who observes, that Franco petulantly denies that Ariosto was crowned poet, though, besides other testimonies, we have the exclusive privilege granted him by Charles V.

I have thus laid before the reader the chief arguments on the subject, that he may form his own opinion of a fact, which, upon the whole, appears to me at least extremely doubtful; and, indeed, the difficulty attending the proof of a matter, that must have been of such notoriety, and surely upon public record, is to me a forcible presumption against the fact itself, since we see that the account of this kind of honour, which was two hundred years before conferred on the poet Petrarch, has been brought down to us without any equivocal circumstances.

"The custom," says Dr. Burney*, "of crowning persons who had distinguished themselves in poetry and

* See History of Music, vol. ii. page 329.

music, which was almost as ancient as the arts themselves, subsisted till the reign of the emperor Theodosius, when the Capitoline games, being regarded as remnants of superstition, were utterly abolished. It was not till near the time of Petrarch that poetry recovered its ancient lustre or importance, or was invested with its former prerogatives."

It may not be here altogether foreign to my subject, or unentertaining to the English reader, whose curiosity may probably be excited by the mention of so extraordinary a ceremony, to give an account of this honour, which, as we have before mentioned, was bestowed on Petrarch; the particulars of which I shall transcribe from the elegant Life of that poet published in the year 1775.

"Orso, count of Anguillara, was senator of Rome, when Petrarch arrived there in the spring of 1341, and was to continue in office but a few weeks longer. The day of the ceremony being fixed, the assembly was convoked early in the morning on Easter-day, which happened to be very serene and favourable to the solemnity. The trumpets sounded, and the people, eager to view a ceremony that had been discontinued for so many years, ran in crowds to behold it. The streets were strewed with flowers, and the windows filled with ladies dressed in the most sumptuous manner, who sprinkled as much perfumed waters on the poet, as would serve for a year in the kingdom of Spain.

"Petrarch appeared at last at the capitol, preceded by twelve young men in scarlet habits. These were chosen out of the first families in Rome, and recited his verses; while he, adorned with the robe of state which the king

of Naples had given him, followed in the midst of six of the principal citizens clothed in green, with crowns of flowers on their heads: after whom came the senator, accompanied by the first men of the council. When he was seated in his place, Petrarch made a short harangue upon a verse drawn from Virgil: after which, having cried three times, "Long live the people of Rome! Long live the senator! God preserve them in liberty!" he kneeled down before the senator, who, after a short discourse, took from his head a crown of laurel, and put it upon Petrarch's, saying, "This crown is the reward of merit." Then Petrarch recited a fine sonnet on the heroes of Rome. This sonnet is not in his works.

"The people shewed their joy and approbation by loud and repeated shouts; by clapping their hands, and crying out several times, "Long flourish the capitol! Long live the poet!" Stephen Colonna then spoke; and, as he truly loved Petrarch, he gave him that praise which comes from the heart.

"When the ceremony in the capitol was ended, Petrarch was conducted in pomp, with the same retinue, to the church of St. Peter, where, after a solemn mass, and returning thanks to God for the honour he had received, he took off his crown to place it among the offerings, and hung it up on the arch of the temple.

"The same day the count of Anguillara had letters patent drawn up, by which the senators, after a very flattering preface, declare Petrarch to have merited the title of a great poet and historian; and that at Rome, and in every other place, by the authority of king Robert, the Roman senate and the people of Rome, he

should have full liberty to read and comment on poetry and history, or on any of the works of the ancients, and to publish any of his own productions, and to wear, on all solemn occasions, the crown of laurel, beech or myrtle, and the poetic dress. In fine, they declare him a citizen of Rome, with all the privileges thereof, as a reward for the affection he has always expressed for the city and republic.

“Petrarch was then brought to the palace of the Colonnas, where a magnificent feast was prepared for him, at which were assembled all the nobility and men of letters in Rome*.”

To return to Ariosto. The name of this poet is still held in that kind of veneration by his countrymen with which the English consider their Shakespeare. Antonio Zatta, in his edition of Ariosto's works of 1772, relates that a chair and ink-standish, which, according to tradition, belonged to Ariosto, were then in the possession of Il Signor Dottore Giovanni Andrea Barotti at Ferrara, and that a specimen of his hand-writing was preserved in the public library of that city. The republic of Venice did him the honour to cause his picture to be painted, and hung up with the senators and other illustrious men in the great Council Hall, which was afterwards destroyed by fire.

It appears, however, that Ariosto did not finally receive from his professed patrons those rewards, or obtain that establishment, to which he thought his merits had entitled him. Probably the government of Grafagnana added more to his reputation than his fortune; and, from

* Life of Petrarch, vol. i. page 237.

what he says in several parts of his Satires, he was by no means satisfied with his patrons of Ferrara. Nothing particular is recorded of the benefactions of the cardinal to him, before he incurred the displeasure of that prelate. The duke, indeed, gave him two assignments on certain gabels or taxes, the first of which ceased with the abolition of the tax; and the second, which produced him only twenty-five crowns every fourth month, collected, as he says himself, with great trouble, was contested and withheld from him during the wars of Lombardy; and some say, that the cardinal, upon withdrawing his patronage, deprived him of this slender advantage. Ariosto himself seems to impute his loss to the duke, and speaks thus on the subject, in his satire addressed to A. M. Sigismundo Malaguzzi.

Tu dei saper, che la mia voglia avara
 Unqua non fù; ch'io solea star contento
 De lo stipendio, che traeva in Ferrara.
 Ma non sai forse; come uscì poi lento
 Succedendo la guerra, e come volse,
 Il duca che restasse in tutto spento.

Satire iv.

Thou know'st I ne'er was tutor'd wealth to crave,
 Content with what Ferrara's patrons gave,
 Th' allotted stipend—but thou'rt yet to know
 Succeeding wars had made the stipend low.
 At length (so will'd the duke) the gain decreas'd
 To less from little, till the whole had ceas'd.

Such were the great advantages which he derived from those in whose service he had engaged, and whose names he had immortalized by his muse.

Two medals are said to have been struck, both bearing his effigies, but the devices different: on the first was figured a serpent, over which was suspended a hand, with a pair of shears ready to cut off the head or sting;

and the other representing a bee-hive, where the bees are driven from their habitation with fire and smoke, that the countryman may possess himself of their honey. The motto of both these medals was PRO BONO MALUM. Some affirm, that these devices were of Ariosto's invention; the first to express the nature of his detractors; and the second to shew that, instead of honours and rewards for his labours, he met only with scoff and derision, alluding the reception given his Orlando by the cardinal, who, having perused it, asked him, with the most tasteless indifference, where he had collected so many fooleries. Every reader of fine taste, with which fine feeling is inseparable, will form some idea of the poet's thoughts at that time, and may recollect the like illiberal reflection of the statesman Burleigh, on Queen Elizabeth's bounty to our own Spenser, *All this for a song*.

Dolce relates, that he caused the device of the serpent to be prefixed to the second edition of his poem; but that in the third he changed it into the bee-hive. In an edition of the Orlando, printed at Bologna in 1540, is a device in the title-page, of two serpents, with a hand and shears; the tongue of one of these serpents is cut out, with this motto round them: DILEXISTI MALITIAM SUPER BENIGNITATEM.

With respect to Pope Leo X. the acknowledged patron of literature and arts, whom Fornari calls particularly liberal to poets, and by whom he relates that Ariosto was highly esteemed, he is said to have made him a present of some hundred crowns for the prosecution of his work, though Ariosto himself is silent upon that head;

and yet in the verses published by Gabriele Simeoni, in his satire upon Avarice, are these lines :

Successe a lui Leon poi lume e specchio
De cortesia, che fù la cagion prime,
Che al' Ariosto ancor porgiamo orecchio.

Leo to him succeeds, in whom we find
The light and mirror of a courteous mind :
To him we owe, that now, in tuneful strains,
Great Ariosto's page our ear detains.

And in the margin is this note: Leo X. gave Ariosto several hundred crowns to complete his work.

Upon the exaltation of Leo X. to the papal chair, he paid a visit to that pontiff, with great expectations of advantage, as appears from his viiith satire. The pope gave him a very gracious reception, and gave him a grant of half the profits of a certain bull, the amount of which is altogether unknown; and possibly the sum arising from this may be the donation meant by Simeoni. It is however certain, that he left Rome dissatisfied in his expectation: he declares that Fortune, when she raises men to dignities, dips them in Lethe; at the same time he bears testimony to the pope's honourable reception of him.

Testimonio son io di quel ch'io scrivo,
Ch'io nol 'ho ritrovato, quando il piede,
Gli baccia prima, di memoria privo.
Piegassi a me de la beata sede,
La mano e poi le gote ambi mi prese,
E'l santo baccio in amendue mi diede.
De meza quella bolla anco cortese
Mi fù, de la qual ora il mio Bibiena
Esposito m' ha il resto a le mie spese.

Satire iii.

This well I know, this truth can well attest,
When with my lips his reverend foot I press'd.

He seem'd not mindless of his grace design'd,
 But lowly from his blessed seat declin'd:
 My hand he gracious took, on either side,
 He to my cheek a holy kiss apply'd;
 And more—he gave me half the bull to share,
 Consign'd me, at my cost, by Bibicna's care.

But it seems that Ariosto had raised his thoughts to some great ecclesiastical preferment: on which occasion Signor Rolli observes, that one reason why he was not preferred was, that he was devoted to Alphonso of Ferrara, whom the pope hated, and therefore could not give our author a cardinal's hat. Leo died in 1521, six years after the first publication, and the year in which Ariosto published the third edition of his poem. Perhaps had he lived longer, the poet might have experienced further marks of his generosity.

A very extraordinary circumstance is related, and has been received as truth by some, that pope Leo X. exerted the authority and influence of his apostolic character in promoting the success of Ariosto's poem, and that he went so far as to publish a bull in favour of the Orlando Furioso, denouncing the censure of excommunication on all those who should presume to find fault with that performance. Bayle, in his article of Leo X. gravely propagates the story in these words: "*Etoit ce garder le decorum de la paupauté que d'expedier une bulle si favorable aux poësies de l'Arioste, Hippolite en jugea très bien, quand il dit, D'où avez-vous pris tant de fadaïses. Leo fut plus debonnaire en menaçant d'excommunication ceux qui les blâmeroient ou empecheroient le profit de l'imprimeur.*" This matter was very likely to be caught up by Voltaire,

who accordingly alludes to it, with his usual gaiety, in his last opinion given of Ariosto*.

Upon a close inquiry it will perhaps appear, that there was no other foundation for this story than a diploma or licence granted by Leo for the sale of the work, and this merely from his authority as a temporal prince, in the same manner as patents or privileges are granted in other nations by their respective sovereigns.

We learn from Fontanini, that to the third edition of Ariosto's poem in 1521, published at Ferrara, was a diploma of Leo X. for printing the work (*privativa della stampa*), written by cardinal Jacobo Sadoletto, Secretary of the Briefs; and that other diplomas of the same nature were granted to Ariosto by the king of France, by the Venetians, by the Florentines, by the Genoese, and other powers. Apostolo Zeno relates that he had seen a fourth edition, which had once been in the possession of Peter Aretine, in the blank leaf of which were several poetical pieces by that poet; and that in the beginning was a diploma of Clement VII. written by Palladio Blossio, Secretary of the Briefs, dated January, 1532, which grants to Ariosto the privilege of printing, publishing, and vending his *Orlando Furioso*, with any additions or corrections, *imprimere, corrigere, et supplere, et in melius reformare*.

In the college library at Winchester is an old edition of a Greek Pindar, printed at Rome in 1515, the year in which Ariosto's work was first published, with a diploma or privilege of Leo X. in the title-page†; and in

* See preface, page 21.

† *Impressi Romæ per Zachariam Calergi Cretensem, per missu S. D. N. Leonis X. Pont. Max. ea etiam conditione, ut nequit alius*

1513, a patent for printing masses, set to music, was granted by the same pope to Ottavio Petruccio.

After what has been said, I believe there can be little reason to doubt but that this pretended bull of Leo was nothing more than a common licence to a book, granted in the customary forms; which circumstance appears to have been violently exaggerated, from the religious fury of the times, to cast an odium on the papal authority in general, and on Leo in particular; and has since been received without examination.

The general character and qualities of Ariosto may be, in some sort, gathered from the foregoing narrative, to which his Italian biographers have added the following particulars.

In his conversation he was modest and affable to every body, demeaning himself in such a manner, as if altogether unconscious of that great superiority which nature had given him: he was close in argument and ready in repartees, but was seldom observed to laugh more than became the dignity of a philosopher: yet, though his temper was rather inclined to melancholy, which is perhaps the nature of every great genius, he was very remote from a rigid disposition; being particularly open and sprightly in his conversation with women, by whom his company was much coveted. He was an avowed enemy to ceremony, though always ready to pay due respect to place and rank. He abhorred all those dignities that could only be acquired by servility: he was a sincere lover of his country, loyal to

per quinquennium hos imprimere, aut venundare Libros possit, utque qui secus fecerit, is ab universa Dei Ecclesia, toto orbe terrarum expers excommunicatusque censeatur.

his prince, and steady in his friendships. In his diet he was abstemious, making only one meal a day, and that generally towards the evening, and was neither curious for variety or luxuries, being indeed a contemner of luxury in general.

Io non hò molto gusto di vivande,
Che scalco sia, fui degno esser' al mondo,
Quando vivevan gli huomini di ghiande.

I little heed what plenteous wealth affords,
Where costly dainties pile luxurious boards:
Well had I liv'd, when man to hardship bred,
In early times on simple acorns fed!

Satire ii.

While he was composing his Orlando, he would frequently rise in the middle of the night, and cause his servant Gianni to bring him pen, ink, and paper, when he wrote down what had immediately occurred to his imagination, which in the day he communicated to his friends.

His integrity was incorruptible, as appears by what he says to his brother Galasso of the old man, who, being possessed of great wealth, was fearful of being poisoned by his relations, and therefore would trust himself in no hands but Ariosto.

His affection, as a son and brother, is seen from the care he took of his family, after the death of his father: concerning his mother, he thus tenderly expresses himself:

L'eta di nostra madre mi percore
Di pietà il core, che da tutti a un tratto
Senz' infamia lasciata esser non puote.

I view my mother's age with pitying eye,
That draws my soul by every tender tie:
Shall she be left by all? forbid it shame,
And every duty to a parent's name!

Satire ii.

He took great delight in building, but was an economist in his expenses that way: a friend once expressing an astonishment that he, who had described such magnificent edifices in his poem, should be contented with so poor a dwelling, Ariosto answered very aptly, that "words were much easier put together than bricks;" and leading him to the door of his house, pointed to this distich, which he had caused to be engraved on the portico:

Parva, sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non
Sordida, parva meo sed tamen ære domus.

Small is my humble roof, but well design'd
To suit the temper of the master's mind;
Hurtful to none, it boasts a decent pride,
That my poor purse the modest cost supply'd.

Notwithstanding what has been mentioned of his personal bravery in the engagement between the pope's vassals and the duke's, he is reported to have been naturally of a timid disposition: when on horseback, he would alight on the least appearance of danger: he was particularly timorous on the water; and when he went out of a vessel, would always stay till the last, frequently using this expression, *de puppe novissimus exi*; in every other respect his temper was firm and unruffled.

His son Virginio has left behind him the following particulars relative to his father, which we will insert in his own words, as the least matter of information must gratify curiosity in the life of so extraordinary a man.

“ He was never satisfied with his verses, but continually altering them. He was very fond of gardening, but so frequently varying his design, that he never suffered any plant to remain above three months; at the same time he knew little of botany. I remember, that once imagining he had planted capers, he was highly pleased to see them thrive so well, till at last, instead of capers, he found that he had planted elder. Of authors he highly approved Virgil and Tibullus; he greatly extolled Horace, but thought little of Propertius.

“ He made no distinction in his food, but always eat of that which was next him, and often eat a small loaf or roll after he had dined. He was in general so lost in meditation, that he attended little to what passed. It so happened that a stranger once came to visit him at dinner-time, and while his guest was talking, Ariosto eat the meat that was set before him: for which being afterwards reproved by his brother, he only coolly replied, “ That the loss was the stranger’s, and that he ought to have taken care of himself.”

Sir John Harington has given the following anecdote of Ariosto, for which he has not mentioned his authority, and which does not appear in any of the biographers or commentators consulted in writing this life. Take the relation in Sir John’s own words.

“ As he himself could pronounce very well, so it was a great penance to him to hear others pronounce ill that which himself had written excellent well. Insomuch as they tell of him, how coming one day by a potter’s shop that had many earthen vessels ready made to sell on his stall, the potter fortunèd, at that time, to sing some

stave or other out of Orlando Furioso, I think where Rinaldo requested his horse to tarry for him, in the first book, the 32d stanza.

Ferma, Baiardo, mio, deh, ferma il piede
Che l'esser senza de troppo, mi nuoce.

Stay, my Bayardo, stay!--thy flight restrain,
Much has thy want to day perplex'd thy lord.

“Or some such grave matter fit for a potter: but he plotted the verses out so ill-favouredly (as might well bescem his dirty occupation), that Ariosto being, or at least making semblance to be in a great rage withal, with a little walking stick he had in his hand, brake divers of the pots. The poor potter, put quite beside his song, and almost beside himself, to see his market half marred before it was a quarter done, in a pitiful tone or manner, between railing and whining, asked, What he meant to wrong a poor man that had never done him injury in all his life? Yes, varlet! quoth Ariosto, I am yet scarce even with thee for the wrong thou hast done me here before my face, for I have broken but half a dozen base pots of thine, that are not worth so many halfpence, but thou hast broken and mangled a fine stanza of mine worth a mark of gold*.”

A story of the same kind has been likewise told of Camöens; and Mr. Mickle observes, that “both these silly tales are borrowed from Plutarch’s Life of Arcesilaus, where the same dull humour is told of Philoxenus. He heard some brickmakers mistune one

* Sir John Harrington’s Life of Ariosto.

of his songs, and, in return, destroyed a number of their bricks *."

He was of an amorous constitution, and very apt to receive impressions from every beautiful object, violent in his attachments, impatient of a rival; but in his amours he was discreet, cautious, and secret. It has been said that he might possibly allude to this by the sculpture of his ink-standish, on the top of which was a Cupid, with his fore finger placed on his lip, as an emblem of silence. This disposition to gallantry, which he retained to the last year of his life, is confirmed by many parts of his writings.

Pensi, chi vuol, ch'el tempo i lacci scioglia
 Che amore anoda, e che ci dorrem' anco,
 Nomando questa leve e bassa voglia;
 Ch'io per me voglio al capel nero e bianco,
 Amare ed esortar che sempre s'ami,
 E se in me tal voler dee venir manco;
 Spezzi or la parca al mia vita i stami.

There are who think, that time, with stealing hand,
 Dissolves the knot of Cupid's tender band;
 That frozen age ill suits with amorous fire,
 When wisdom bids us scorn each frail desire:
 For me, let graceful ringlets deck my head,
 Or hoary snows my wrinkled temples spread;
 Still must I love---still woo the melting dame,
 Exhorting all to love---but when the flame
 Is quite extinct, the sisters' fatal shears
 May cut my thread, and end my useless years.

Elegy xv.

The names of the women, whom he loved, do not appear to be mentioned, except one whom he is said to be strongly attached to, of the name of Geneura, to whom he is supposed to allude in his Sonnet.

Quel' arboscel, che in le solinghe rive
 All' aria spiega i rami oridi et irti,
 E d'odor vince i pin gli abeti e i mirti,
 E lieto e verde al caldo e al ghiaccio vive,
 Il nome hà di colei che mi prescrive
 Termine e leggi a' travagliati spirti,
 Da cui seguir non portrian' scille e sirti
 Ritarmi, o le brumali ore o l'estive.
 E se benigno influxo di planeta,
 Lunghe vigilie od amorosi sproni
 Son per condurmi ad onorata meta;
 Non voglio, o Febo, o Bacco, mi perdoni,
 Che lor frondi mi mostrino poeta;
 Ma che un Ginebro sia che mi coroni.

Yon tree, that near the rivulet's pleasing scene,
 Than pines or myrtles sweeter scents the gale,
 Whose boughs, for ever gay, for ever green,
 Nor drop in summer, nor in winter fail,
 Bears her dear name *, whose beauties fill my heart,
 And o'er my senses boundless sway maintain;
 From whom no change can force me to depart,
 While Fortune shifts her vary'd face in vain!
 Should some fair planet, from benignant skies,
 Befriend a lover's cares, a lover's sighs,
 And kindly lead him to the goal design'd,
 Tho' haply Phæbus chide, or Bacchus frown,
 Their slighted leaves shall ne'er my temples crown,
 But this lov'd tree my happy brows shall bind.

Sonnet vii.

In his early life he contracted an intimacy with a noble Florentine called Nicolo Vespucci, whom he accompanied into Florence in 1513, being then thirty-nine years old, to perfect himself in the Tuscan dialect, and to be present at the magnificent ceremony used at the feast of St. Baptist: here he fell violently in love with a kinswoman of Vespucci, whom he found preparing a

* *Ginebre*, or *Genuro*, the juniper-tree, which, by the liberty the Italians give themselves, may be supposed to stand for *Geneura*.

dress of silver, embroidered with purple for her sons to appear in at the jousts. Ariosto, who was then deeply engaged in writing his poem, is supposed, from this circumstance, to have taken the idea of that beautiful simile in the twenty-fourth book, when he describes the wound received by Zerbino from the hand of Mandricardo.

*Le lucide arme il caldo sangue irriga,
Pen sin al piè di rubiconda riga,
Così tal hora, un bel purpureo nastro
Ho veduto partir tela d'argento,
Da quella bianca man più ch' alabastro
Da cui partir il cor sepezzo mi sento.*

The warm blood issu'd with a crimson tide,
And, trickling down, his shining armour dy'd:
So have I seen a purple floweret spread,
And stain the silver vest with blushing red;
Wrought by her snowy hand with matchless art,
That hand, whose whiteness oft has pierc'd my heart.

It has been the opinion of some, that he was privately married, but that he was obliged to keep it secret for fear of forfeiting some church benefices which he enjoyed: some go so far as to say, that his wife's name was Alexandra, and that he alludes to her in these lines. Orl. Fur. B. xx.

*Alessandra gentil ch'umida avea,
Per la pietà del giovanetto i rai.*

Fair Alexandra, in whose gentle eyes;
Tears, for the youth, in sweet compassion rise.

Concerning the person of Ariosto, he was rather above the common size, of a countenance generally grave and contemplative, as appears from the admirable picture painted by Titian: his head was partly bald; his hair

black and curling; his forehead high; his eye-brows raised; his eyes black and sparkling; his nose large and aquiline; his lips well formed; his teeth even and white; his cheeks rather thin, and his complexion inclining to the olive; he was well made, except that his shoulders were somewhat large, which made him appear to stoop a little; his walk was slow and deliberate, as indeed were his actions in general.

Ariosto left behind him two sons by Alexandra, who were always considered illegitimate; Virginio before named, and J. Baptista; the first of whom being brought up under his father, who took great pains to instruct him, and was made a canon of the house of Ferrara, and Ariosto resigned a great part of his benefices to him: the latter went very young into the army, and having acquired considerable reputation as a soldier, returned to Ferrara a little while before Ariosto's death, and died himself an officer in the duke's service.

Ariosto is reported to have met his dissolution with the utmost composure, and to have told some of his friends, who were present at his last moments, that he left the world without the least reluctance; and the more so, because, as he believed, that, in another state, men would know each other, he was impatient to meet again so many friends that had gone before him.

He was interred in the church of St. Benedict, under a plain monument, which was afterwards enriched with a number of inscriptions in the Greek, Latin, and Tuscan Languages, the greatest wits contending to celebrate his memory.

Ariosto, among his other Latin pieces, left the following epitaph written for himself, but which an Italian writer of his life supposes to have been considered as too ludicrous to be made use of upon the occasion:

“ LUDOVICUS ARIOSTUS humanitur ossa
 “ Sub hoc marmore, vel sub hoc humo, seu
 “ Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres,
 “ Sive hærede benignior comes, seu
 “ Opportunius incidens viator;
 “ Nam scire haud potuit futura, sed nec
 “ Tanti erat vacuum sibi cadaver
 “ Ut urnam cuperet parare vivens,
 “ Vivens ista tamen sibi paravit,
 “ Quæ inscribi voluit suo sepulchro
 “ Olim siquod haberet is sepulchrum *.”

The false thought on which the whole point of this epitaph turns, has been lately justly exposed in an observation on a similar one written by Pope for himself:

Under this stone, or under this sill,
 Or under this turf, &c.

“ When a man is once buried, the question under what he is buried, is easily decided. He forgot that though he wrote the epitaph in a state of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made †.”

* The bones of Ludovico Ariosto are buried under this marble, under this turf, or under whatever pleases his bountiful heir, or perhaps more bountiful friend; or stranger who shall take this charge upon him: he could not look into the future, but was not solicitous, while living, to prepare an urn for his remains; yet, while living, he prepared these lines to be inscribed on his tomb, if such a tomb should ever be obtained.

† Dr. Johnson's Preface to Pope's Works.

The death of Ariosto was lamented by every good man, and the Monks of St. Benedict, contrary to their usual custom, attended his body to the grave; and so great was their veneration of his name, that they would, by no means, consent that his bones should be afterwards removed to a chapel or sepulchre erected for him by his son Virginio, in the garden belonging to his house, which was afterwards destroyed by an ignorant builder, without the concurrence, and to the great mortification of the owners of the dwelling. However, many years after, Signor Agostino Mosti, who had a sincere regard for the memory of Ariosto, having been early initiated by him in the knowledge of polite letters, and who was concerned that so great a man should want a monument worthy of him, resolved to build one that should be answerable to the veneration he had for his many virtues. He therefore caused a marble sepulchre to be erected at his own expense in the same church of St. Benedict, adorned with proper emblems, and a fine statue of Ariosto; and to show the zeal with which he paid this last duty to his master, he deposited, with his own hands, the bones of this illustrious poet in their new sepulchre, with the following inscription, and the annexed verses composed by Lorenzo Frizoli.

“ D. O. M.

“ LUDOVICO AREOSTO, Poetæ Patricio Ferrariensi
 “ Augustinus Mustus Tanto Viro, Ac de se bene merenti
 ‘ tumulum et effigiem marmoris, ære proprio P. C. Anno
 “ Salutis MDLXXXIII. VIII. Idus Junii Alphonso II.
 “ Duce, vixit ann. LXX. Obiit ann. Salut. MDXXXIII.
 “ Idus Junii.

- " Hic Areostus est situs, qui comica
 " Aures theatri sparsit urbanæ sale,
 " Satyraque mores strinxit acer improbæ,
 " Heroa cultus qui furenteo carmine
 " Ducumque curas cecinit, atque prælia
 " Vates corona dignus unus triplici,
 " Cui trina constant, quæ fuere vatibus
 " Graiis, Latinis, vixque Etruscis, singula."

But in the year 1612 a new and more magnificent monument was erected for him by his nephew's son Ludovico Ariosto, with the effigies of the poet, and two statues representing Glory and Poetry: to this his bones were removed, for the third time. This monument is still to be seen in the church of the Benedictines at Ferrara, with the following inscription:

" D. O. M.

- " Ter illi Maximo, atque ore omnium celeberrimo vati,
 " A Carolo V. coronato, nobilitate generis, atque animi
 " claro, in rebus publicis administrandis, in regendis
 " publicis, in gravissimis ad summos Pontifices Lega-
 " tionibus prudentia, consilio, eloquentia, præstantissimo,
 " Ludovicus Areostus pronepos, ne quid domesticæ
 " pietati, ad tanti viri gloriam cumulandam defuisse
 " videri possit, magno Patruo, cujus ossa hîc vere condita
 " sunt P. C. Anno Salutis MDCXII. vixit An. LIX.
 " Obiit An. Salut. MDXXXIII. VIII. Idus Junii."

Notus et Hesperis jacet hic Ariostus et Indis,
 Cui musa eternum nomen Hetrusca dedit,
 Seu satyram in vitio exacuit, seu comica lusit,
 Seu cecinit grandi bella ducesque tuba,
 Ter summus vates! cui summi in vertice Pindi,
 Tergemina licuit cingere fronde comas!

Here Ariosto lies, whose deathless name
From east to west the muses crown with fame;
Whose pointed satire lash'd the vicious age;
Whose comic scenes inspir'd the laughing stage;
Whose martial trumpet, breathing loud alarms,
Could sing of mighty chiefs and bruising arms.
Hail, matchless bard! for Pindus' summit born,
Whose happy brows the triple bays adorn!



GENERAL VIEW
OF
BOYARDO'S STORY,

As connected with

ARISTO.

CHARLEMAIN, having proclaimed a solemn feast and tournament in Paris, at which were present many foreign princes and knights from various parts of the world, as well Pagan as Christian, on a certain day, when all the nobles and strangers were assembled, an unknown knight and lady entered the hall, attended by four giants of a dreadful stature. The lady, whose personal charms dazzled all the spectators, addressed herself to the emperor; and begging an audience, told him, that her name was Angelica, that she came with her brother Uberto, from a distant kingdom, attracted by the fame of the magnificence of his court; that her brother, who earnestly desired to prove his valour with the warriors then present, was ready to meet any of them in the field, whether Saracen or Christian, upon condition, that whoever was unhorsed by him, should immediately become his prisoner; but that if he himself should be overthrown, he promised to depart with his giants, and leave

his sister as the prize of the conqueror: she concluded with saying, that her brother would expect them at his pavilion without the city.

The lady, having received a gracious answer, retired with her company, while every knight, captivated with her charms, felt the utmost impatience to enter the list with the stranger: but above the rest, Orlando, whose eyes had been rivetted on so beautiful an object, confessed the poison of love, though he studiously endeavoured to conceal his inward emotions: even Namus could not resist the power of such perfections, nor was Charlemain himself wholly exempted from the general contagion.

In the mean time Malagigi, a cousin to Rinaldo, who was deeply skilled in magic, suspecting that the uncommon visit of these strangers foreboded no good to the Christians, had recourse to his art, and upon consulting his spirits, received intelligence, that the lady was daughter to Galaphron, king of Cathay; that the knight her brother was not called Uberto, but Argalia; that the king their father, to effect a great design which he meditated, had procured for his son a suit of enchanted armour, a golden lance of such hidden virtue, that the least touch of it would dismount the stoutest warrior, and a horse of incomparable swiftness: to these gifts he added a ring of such wonderful efficacy, that being conveyed into the mouth, it made the person invisible, and, being worn upon the finger, had the power to frustrate all enchantments: but that the king confided chiefly in the beauty of his daughter, not doubting, but her charms would fascinate the champions of Charlemain,

BOYARDO's STORY.

and that she would bring them prisoners to the throne of Cathay.

Malagigi having heard this, conceived the design of delivering his country from the impending danger: he caused himself to be transported, by his spirits, to the pavilion of Argalia, whom he found asleep, with Angelica near him, guarded by the four giants: these he soon cast into a deep slumber by the force of his spells, and drew his sword, with a determination to put an end to the life of this dangerous beauty: but, as he approached her, he began to feel sensations of a very different nature, till every resolution, giving way to the softer passions that inspired him, from a nearer view of her charms, he could no longer resist the powerful impulse, but advanced to embrace her.

Angelica, who had the ring upon her finger, which preserved her from the force of his incantations, suddenly awaked, and finding herself in the arms of a man, uttered a loud cry: Argalia ran to her assistance, and seized Malagigi, while the princess made herself mistress of his magical book, and calling upon his spirits, commanded them to convey the prisoner to her father's kingdom; which was performed in an instant.

In order to put an end to the dissention that had arisen in the Christian court, each champion claiming the preference to enter first the list with Argalia, the emperor commanded that lots should be drawn; when the names that appeared were Astolpho, Ferrau, Rinaldo, and next Charlemain, who would not be excluded, notwithstanding his age: after these came a number more before the name of Orlando appeared.

Astolpho being armed, as the first on the list of combatants, presented himself to encounter Argalia, was unhorsed by the golden lance, and sent prisoner into the pavilion. Next morning, at day-break, Ferrau, a Spanish knight, came from the city to try his fortune, and was overthrown in the same manner: but refusing to yield to the conditions of the combat, the giants endeavoured to seize his person; these he slew, and compelled Argalia to engage him on foot. Angelica, fearing the issue of their combat, fled; when Argalia, perceiving her flight, followed her, and was as suddenly pursued by Ferrau.

Ferrau, after some time, entering the forest of Arden, found Argalia asleep, who had not been able to overtake his sister. The Spaniard, determined that he should not escape him, turned Argalia's horse loose, and waited, with the utmost impatience, till his enemy awaked. An obstinate battle then ensued, till victory at last declared for Ferrau, when Argalia, finding himself mortally wounded, entreated that when he was dead, his body, with all his arms, might be thrown into the river, that no one might wear them after him, and reproach his memory for suffering himself to be vanquished when he was defended with impenetrable armour. Ferrau promised to grant his request, having first desired the use of his helmet for a few days, his own being demolished in the battle.

After the departure of Argalia, Angelica, and Ferrau, Astolpho having recovered his liberty, mounted his horse, took the golden lance which Argalia had left behind him, and returned to the city; in his way he met Rinaldo, who was impatient to learn the issue of the

combat ; and having heard what had passed, determined to go in search of Angelica.

Orlando, who had felt no ease since the appearance of the lovely stranger, after Astolpho's return, left the court of Charlemain, and set out likewise to follow Angelica, and in his way met with various adventures.

When Rinaldo first left the court of Charlemain to follow Angelica, he entered the forest of Arden, where he came to the enchanted fountain made by Merlin the magician, to cure Sir Tristram of his passion for Isotta ; but though it so happened that the knight never tasted of the water, yet the virtue of it remained ever after. Rinaldo arriving here, drank of the fountain, and immediately found his love for Angelica converted into hatred : he then came to the other fountain, likewise the work of Merlin, called the Fountain of Love, which had the faculty of inspiring the breast with that passion : here, tempted by the beauty of the place, he alighted from his horse, yet, as he had before quenched his thirst, he drank not of the stream, but stretching himself on the turf, soon fell into a profound sleep.

Angelica, who had fled while her brother was engaged with Ferrau, was led by chance to the same place where Rinaldo lay ; the princess, fatigued with her flight, and invited by the clearness of the water, drank a large draught, and conceived a violent passion for the sleeping knight, whom she stood contemplating with inexpressible pleasure, till he awaked. As soon as Rinaldo opened his eyes, and beheld Angelica, who was now become the object of his most bitter aversion, he remounted his horse, and left the place with the utmost precipitation,

in spite of the most moving entreaties which the lovesick virgin made use of to detain him.

About this time Gradasso, king of Sericana, having been long desirous to get possession of Durindana, Orlando's sword, and of Bayardo, Rinaldo's horse, passed with a great army into France, and, Orlando being absent, he defeated Charlemain in a general battle, and made him and many of his leaders prisoners. Charlemain promised, at the return of Orlando, to give up to him Durindana and Bayardo; but Astolpho, who was at Paris, and in possession of Bayardo, refused to resign him, and challenged Gradasso to the joust, whom he overthrew with the golden lance, when, according to the conditions of their rencounter, Charlemain and all the prisoners were set at liberty: Gradasso then joined himself to Marsilius.

After the return of Angelica to India, Agrican king of Tartary, and father of Mandricardo, demanded her in marriage; but being refused by her, he raised a great army, and besieged her in Albracca, the capital of Cathay, inviting other nations to join him. Many gallant actions were performed at the siege. Orlando, Brandimart, Sacripant, Marphisa, Astolpho, and many others, took the part of Angelica; but Rinaldo, who at that time hated Angelica, from his having drank of the enchanted fountain, joined himself to her enemies: in consequence of which he had several encounters with Orlando. After various successes on either side, and an infinity of adventures engaged in by the several knights during the siege, Agrican was slain by Orlando in single combat; and Angelica, hearing that Rinaldo, whom she

then loved, was gone to France, persuaded Orlando to accompany her thither; and, after her departure, the enemies of Albracca, taking advantage of the absence of Orlando, and her other brave defenders, entered the city by storm, and reduced it to ashes.

When Angelica, after the taking of Albracca, returned to France with Orlando, she passed again through the forest of Arden, and, in her way, happened to drink of the fountain of hatred, which entirely obliterated her former passion. About the same time Rinaldo, meeting with the contrary fountain, drank of the waters of love.

While the siege of Albracca was carrying on, Agramant, the young king of Africa, only twenty-two years of age, and the bravest knight in the dominions of Africa, except Rodomont king of Sarza, burning with desire to revenge the death of his father Troyano, slain by the Christians, ordered a council to be called in the city of Biserta, the capital of his empire, where two and thirty kings, his tributaries, being assembled, he proposed to them his design of invading the kingdom of Charlemain. After many debates it was at last resolved to transport a powerful force into France, notwithstanding the prophecy of the king of Garamanta, who declared that the expedition would prove fatal to Agramant and his army.

When the king of Garamanta had in vain endeavoured to dissuade Agramant from his designed invasion of France, he told the monarch, that there remained but one expedient by which he might hope to meet with any success against the Christians; this was, to take with him a young hero, named Rogero, who then resided with

Atlantes, the magician, on mount Carena. Agramant having, in consequence of this advice, made many fruitless researches to find the fatal warrior, was directed, by the king of Garamanta, to procure the enchanted ring, then in possession of Angelica, daughter of Galaphron, king of Cathay, without which the retreat of Atlantes could never be discovered. Thereupon Agramant, offering great rewards to any one that would undertake this adventure, Brunello, a person of mean extraction, but well versed in the arts of fraud, engaged to perform it. Accordingly he went to Albracca, stole the ring from the princess, and brought it to Agramant, who, in recompense for his good service, made him king of Tingitana. In this excursion, Brunello likewise stole Sacripant's horse Frontino, Marphisa's sword, Orlando's sword Balisarda, which he had won from the enchantress Falerina, and the famous horn which he had taken from Almontes.

Agramant having got possession of this precious ring, went, with all his court, to the mountain, where Atlantes was said to reside; and the ring having dispelled every mist that enchantment had cast before their eyes, they soon discovered the rock on which was the wonderful dwelling; but the height forbidding all approaches to it, Agramant, by the advice of Brunello, ordered a tournament to be held on the plain at the foot of the rock. Rogero, roused with the sound of the warlike instruments, and fired with the sight of horses and armour, which he stood for some time contemplating from the summit of the rock, at last made Atlantes, though with great reluctance, descend with him to the plain. Brunello, who carefully watched the success of his project,

soon espied Rogero with Atlantes, and drawing near them, entered into conversation: Brunello was then completely armed and mounted on Frontino, when observing, that Rogero was struck with the beauty of his horse and armour, he presented them to him, and the young warrior impatiently arming himself, and girding Balisarda to his side, leaped on Frontino, and entered the lists, where he overthrew every opponent, and obtained the whole honour of the day. All the combatants were astonished at the valour of this unknown champion, till Agramant, having at last discovered him to be Rogero, whom he had so eagerly sought for, received him with open arms, conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, and engaged him to accompany him to France, notwithstanding all the arguments used by Atlantes, to dissuade the king from taking Rogero with him in that expedition.

After encountering a variety of dangers and adventures, Orlando and Angelica arrived at the Christian camp, where Orlando and Rinaldo meeting, a dreadful combat ensued between them for the lady; but Charlemain interposing with his authority, put an end to the battle, and delivered Angelica to the care of Namus duke of Bavaria *.

Marsilius, king of Spain, being encamped near mount Albano, to which he prepared to lay siege, was joined by Rodomont, king of Sarza, who had passed from Africa before Agramant, and after having lost great part of his fleet in a storm, landed with the remainder of his forces near Monaco, where he met with a very warm reception from the Christians.

* Here begins the action of Ariosto's poem.

Charlemain, having collected the strength of the empire, marched with Orlando and Rinaldo to attack Marsilius, whose army being now reinforced by some of the bravest warriors, among whom were Rodomont, and Ferrau, was able to make head against him. The battle was fought with great obstinacy on both sides. Orlando and Rinaldo, elevated with the hopes of possessing Angelica, performed prodigies of valour: Rodomont made great slaughter of the Christians, and Bradamant, sister to Rinaldo, signalized herself in a particular manner. In the mean time, Agramant, having embarked his forces at Biserta, was landed, and advanced with speedy marches towards mount Albano, bringing with him the flower of the African chivalry, among which was the young Rogero, who had been with difficulty drawn from the enchanted fortress, in which he had been shut by Atlantes, to avoid the destiny which threatened him, but whose presence, like that of Achilles, had been declared of the highest importance to the expedition. This young warrior was accompanied by Atlantes, who, since he could not divert his charge from the pursuit of glory, was prompted, by his anxiety, to be near him in time of danger.

The whole force of the Saracens being now united, the battle raged with redoubled fury. Rogero, having overthrown numbers of the Christians, at last singled out Orlando, when Atlantes, fearing the event of such an encounter, by his magic art fascinated the eyes of Orlando, who, believing that he saw Charlemain in danger, abruptly left the field, and was made prisoner in an enchanted garden. At this time Mandricardo joined the army of Agramant, when Rogero and Rinaldo being

engaged in single combat, the Christians began to give ground, till being entirely discouraged by the absence of Orlando, the rout became general, and the tide of fugitives and pursuers parted Rinaldo and Rogero.

During this general battle between the Pagans and Christians, Bradamant being engaged in single combat with Rodomont, received intelligence from Rogero, who chanced to be a spectator of their battle, that Charlemain was in imminent danger; upon which she desired to go to his assistance, but Rodomont opposing this, Rogero took her quarrel upon himself, encountered Rodomont, and disarmed him, who then retired vanquished by the courtesy of his enemy. After the departure of the prince of Sarza, Bradamant, struck with the manly deportment of Rogero, was desirous to learn who he was, and received from him the account of his origin.

Bradamant, in return, discovered her birth and name, and taking off her helmet, surprised the young warrior with her beauty. At this instant a band of Pagans fell in with them, one of whom wounded Bradamant in the head, which was then unarmed. Rogero, who had by this time conceived a violent passion for the fair warrior, and enraged at the brutality of the action, advanced furiously to revenge it on the author; the Pagans then attacked him all at once, and Bradamant, who now began to feel the tenderest sentiments for Rogero, immediately joined him: their united force soon got the better of their adversaries, who were either slain, or put to flight: but it so happened, that in the pursuit the two lovers were separated, this being their first meeting; after this, Bradamant continued to go in search of Rogero, and arrived at the dwelling of a hermit, or friar,

who healed the wound that she had received in her head. Afterwards falling asleep on the banks of a river, she was seen by Flordespina, daughter to king Marsilius, who was hunting in the forest, and being deceived by the arms and dress of Bradamant, supposing her to be a man, fell deeply in love with her *.

Orlando, having been delivered by Brandimart, Rogero and Gradasso, from the enchanted garden, where he had been confined by Atlantes, arrived at Paris when the city was closely besieged by Agramant, Marsilius, Rodomont, Mandricardo, Ferrau, and the whole power of the Pagans. Orlando and Brandimart attacked the enemy with great slaughter, and Rodomont attempting to scale the walls, was thrown down by Orlando. The city was however at last in imminent danger of being taken, having been fired in several places; but a great storm arising, with a sudden violent shower of rain, extinguished the flames, and put an end to the battle for that time.

Here the great action of Boyardo breaks off unfinished, and the subject is again taken up by Ariosto, in the eighth book of the ORLANDO FURIOSO.

* This story is completed by Ariosto, *Orl. Fur.* book xxv.

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ORLANDO arrives at the Christian Camp with Angelica, where to put an end to the dissention that had arisen between him and Rinaldo, she is taken from him by Charlemain, and given to the care of Namus. The Christian army is defeated, in a general battle, by the forces of Agramant and Marsilius. Angelica flies from the camp, and is met by Rinaldo, who fights for her with Ferrau, till the combat being broke off by the departure of the lady, they both go in search of her. Ferrau, endeavouring to recover his helmet from the river, sees the ghost of Argalia, who reproaches him with perjury. Angelica, having taken shelter in a bower, sees unexpectedly one of her former lovers, to whom she discovers herself: their conversation is interrupted by the arrival of a strange knight: a battle ensues: the stranger departing, they find Bayardo, Rinaldo's horse, and soon after meet Rinaldo himself.

THE
FIRST BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

DAMES, knights, and arms, and love! the deeds that
spring
From courteous minds, and venturous feats, I sing!'
What time the Moors from Afric's hostile strand
Had crost the seas to ravage Gallia's land,
By Agramant, their youthful monarch, led 5
In deep resentment for Troyano dead,
With threats on Charlemain t' avenge his fate,
Th' imperial guardian of the Roman state.

Ver. 1. *Dames, knights, and arms,--*] It is said Cardinal Hippolito had been heard to declare that Ariosto was particularly difficult in composing the two first lines of his poem, and that he wrote them many times before he could satisfy himself. Marc Antonio Mureto, a most respectable writer of the xvth century, delivers himself thus on the subject: "Audivi a maximis viris qui facillime id nosse poterant, Ludovicum Areostum nobilissimum nobilissimæ domus præconem in *duobus primis* grandiosis illius poematis sui *versibus*, plusquam credi potest, laborasse, neque sibi prius animum explere potuisse, quam quum illos in omnem partem diu multumque verasset."

Ver. 6. — *Troyano dead,*] See General View of Boyardo's Story;

Nor will I less Orlando's acts rehearse,
A tale nor told in prose, nor sung in verse ; 10
Who once the flower of arms, and wisdom's boast,
By fatal love his manly senses lost.

If she, for whom like anguish wounds my heart,
To my weak skill her gracious aid impart,
The timorous bard shall needful succour find, 15
To end the task long ponder'd in his mind.

Vouchsafe, great offspring of th' Herculean line,
In whom our age's grace and glory shine,
Hippolito, these humble lines to take,
The sole return your poet e'er can make ; 20
Who boldly now his gratitude conveys
In sheets like these, and verse for duty pays :
Nor deem the labour poor, or tribute small ;
'Tis all he has, and thus he offers all !

Here midst the bravest chiefs prepare to view, 25
(Those honour'd chiefs to whom the lays are due)
Renown'd Rogero, from whose loins I trace
The ancient fountain of your glorious race :
My muse the hero's actions shall proclaim,
His dauntless courage, and his deathless fame ; 30
So you awhile each weightier care suspend,
And to my tale a pleas'd attention lend.

Orlando, long with amorous passion fir'd,
The love of fair Angelica desir'd :
For her his arms immortal trophies won, 35
In Media, Tartary, and India known. .

Now with her to the west he held his course,
 Where Charlemain encamp'd his martial force,
 And near Pyrene's hills his standard rear'd,
 Where France and Germany combin'd appear'd, 40
 That Spain and Afric's monarchs to their cost,
 Might rue their vain designs and empty boast:
 This, summon'd all his subjects to the field,
 Whose hand could lift the spear, or falchion wield;
 That, once again impell'd the Spanish race, 45
 To conquer Gallia, and her realm deface.
 And hither to the camp Orlando drew,
 But soon, alas! his fatal error knew:
 How oft the wisest err! how short the span
 Of judgment here bestow'd on mortal man! 50
 She, whom from distant regions safe he brought,
 She, for whose sake such bloody fields he fought,
 No sword unsheath'd, no hostile force apply'd,
 Amidst his friends was ravish'd from his side.
 This Charles had doom'd the discord to compose, 55
 That 'twixt Orlando and Rinaldo rose,
 Each kindred chief the beauteous virgin claim'd;
 Deep hatred hence each rival heart inflam'd:
 The king, who griev'd to see the knights engage
 With fatal enmity and jealous rage, 60
 Remov'd th' unhappy cause, and to the care
 Of great Bavaria's duke, consign'd the fair;

Ver. 45. *That, once again impell'd--*] “ Marsilius, king of Spain, who being worsted by Gradasso, king of Sericane, did homage to him for his crown, and joined him: these princes afterwards turned their forces against Charlemain.”

Orl. Innam. B. i, C. i, ii, &c.

Ver. 57. *Each kindred chief--*] Orlando and Rinaldo were cousins.

Ver. 62. *--Bavaria's duke,--*] Namus, duke of Bavaria.

Yet promis'd HE should bear the maid away,
 His valour's prize, on that important day,
 Whose arm could best the Pagan might oppose, 65
 And strow the sanguine plain with lifeless foes.
 But Heaven dispers'd these hopes in empty wind :
 The Christian bands th' inglorious field resign'd ;
 The duke, with numbers more, was prisoner made ;
 The tents, abandon'd, to the foes betray'd. 70

The damsel, doom'd to yield her blooming charms,
 A recompense to grace the victor's arms,
 With terror seiz'd, her ready palfrey took,
 And, by a speedy flight, the camp forsook :
 Her heart presag'd that fortune's fickle turn 75
 That day would give the Christian bands to mourn.
 As through a narrow woodland path she stray'd,
 On foot a warrior chanc'd to meet the maid ;
 The shining cuirass, and the helm he wore,
 His side the sword, his arm the buckler bore ; 80
 While through the woods he ran with swifter pace
 Than village swains half naked in the race.
 Not with such haste the timorous maiden flies,
 Who, unawares, a latent snake espies ;
 As, when Angelica beheld the knight, 85
 She turn'd the reins, and headlong urg'd her flight.
 This was the Paladin for valour known,
 Lord of mount Alban, and duke Amon's son,

Ver. 68. — *th' inglorious field resign'd* ;] At this part Ariosto takes up the story from Boyardo, but passes over the particulars of the battle, which had been fully described by his predecessor. See General View of Boyardo's Story.

Rinaldo nam'd, who late when fortune crost
The Christian arms, his steed Bayardo lost. 90
Soon as his eyes beheld th' approaching fair,
Full well he knew that soft enchanting air;
Full well he knew that face which caus'd his smart,
And held in love's strong net his manly heart.

Meantime th' affrighted damsel threw the reins 95
Loose on her courser's neck, and scour'd the plains;
Through open paths she fled, or tangled shade,
Nor rough, nor bushy paths her course delay'd;
But pale and trembling, struck with deep dismay,
She lets her flying palfrey choose the way. 100
Now here, now there, amidst the savage wood
She wander'd till she saw a running flood;
Where on the lonely banks Ferrau she view'd,
With dust and sweat his weary limbs bedew'd:
Late from the fight he came with toil oppress, 105
To quench his thirst, and taste the sweets of rest;
When soon returning to the bloody fray,
An unexpected chance compell'd his stay;
For where the flood its circling eddies tost,
His helmet, sunk amidst the sands, was lost. 110

Now to the stream the panting virgin flies,
And rends the air with supplicating cries;
The Pagan warrior, startled at the sound,
Leap'd from the shore, and cast his eyes around;

Ver. 90.—*his steed Bayardo lost.*] When Rinaldo, in the last general battle, dismounted to engage Rogero, who was on foot, his horse escaped from him.

Ver. 110. *His helmet, sunk—*] This circumstance of Ferrau leaving the battle, and losing his helmet in the river, is related by Boyardo.

'Till, earnest gazing, as she nearer drew, 115
 Tho' pale with dread, the trembling fair he knew;
 Then as a knight who courteous deeds profess'd,
 And love, long since, enkindled in his breast;
 Dauntless her person to defend he swore,
 Though on his head no fencing helm he wore. 120
 He grasp'd his sword, and mov'd with haughty stride
 To meet Rinaldo, who his force defy'd,
 And oft had each the other's valour try'd. }

And now, on foot, oppos'd, and man to man,
 With swords unsheath'd, a dreadful fight began; 125
 In vain did plate and mail their limbs enclose,
 Not massy anvils could resist their blows.
 While thus his utmost force each warrior try'd,
 His feet again the virgin's palfrey ply'd;
 At his full stretch she drives him o'er the plain, 130
 And seeks the shelter of the woods again.

Long had the knights contended in the field,
 Nor this nor that could make his rival yield;
 With equal skill could each his weapon bear,
 Practis'd alike in all the turns of war, 135
 When Alban's lord with amorous fears possess'd,
 First to the Spanish foe these words address'd.

While thus on me your thoughtless rage you turn,
 Yourself (he cry'd) have equal cause to mourn;
 If yonder dame, the sun of female charms, 140
 Has fill'd your glowing breast with soft alarms,
 What gain is yours?—Suppose me prisoner made,
 Or breathless, by the chance of battle laid;

Yet could you not possess the beauteous prize,
For while we linger here, behold she flies ! 145
But if the passion you profess is true,
Then let us first Angelica pursue :
This wisdom bids---be first secur'd the fair,
And let the sword our title then declare ;
Else what can all our fond contention gain, 150
But fruitless toil and unavailing pain ?

Ferrau with pleasure heard the Christian knight,
Then both agreed t' adjourn the bloody fight ;
And now so firmly were they bound to peace,
So far did rage and rival hatred cease, 155
That, in no wise, the Pagan prince would view
Brave Amon's son on foot his way pursue,
But courteous bade him mount the steed behind,
Then took the track Angelica to find.

O noble minds, by knights of old possess'd ! 160
Two faiths they knew, one love their hearts profess'd ;
And still their limbs the smarting anguish feel,
Of strokes inflicted by the hostile steel.
Through winding paths, and lonely woods they go,
Yet no suspicion their brave bosoms know. 165
At length the horse, with double spurring, drew
To where two several ways appear'd in view ;
When, doubtful which to take, one gentle knight
For fortune took the left, and one the right.
Long through the devious wilds the Spaniard pass'd, 170
And to the river's banks return'd at last :
The place again the wandering warrior view'd,
Where late he dropp'd his casque amidst the flood ;

Ver. 162. -- *the smarting anguish j'el,*] See note to Book xii.
ver. 312.

Since all his hopes to find his love were vain,
Once more he sought his helmet to regain. 175

A tall young poplar on the banks arose ;
From this a branch he hew'd, and lopt the boughs :
A stake thus fashion'd with industrious art,
He rak'd the river round in every part :

When, rising from the troubled brook was seen 180

A youth with features pale and ghastly mien :
Above the circling stream he rais'd his breast ;
His head alone was bare, all arm'd the rest :

His better hand the fatal helmet bore,
The helmet that in vain was sought before : 185

Full on Ferrau he turn'd with threatening look,
And thus the ghost th' astonish'd knight bespoke.

Wretch ! does this helm perplex thy faithless mind,
A helm thou should'st have long ere this resign'd ?
Remember fair Angelica, and view 190

In me her brother, whom thy weapon slew.

Didst thou not vow, with all my arms, to hide
My casque ere long beneath the whelming tide ?

Though basely thou hast fail'd thy plighted word,
See juster fortune has my own restor'd : 195

'Then murmur not—or if thou still must grieve,
Lament that e'er thy falsehood could deceive.

But if thou seek'st another helm to gain,

Seek one that may no more thy honour stain :

Seek one perchance of stronger temper'd charms ; 200
Such has Orlando, such Rinaldo arms :

Mambrino, this ; Almontes, that possess'd ;

By one of these thy brows be nobler press'd :

Ver. 202. *Mambrino, this ; Almontes, that possess'd ;*] I do not find these actions recorded in Boyardo, but like many others mentioned

But what I claim by sacred faith for mine,
Forbear to seek, and willingly resign. 205

The Saracen beheld, with wild affright,
The strange appearance of the phantom-knight;
Up rose his hair, like bristles, on his head,
His utterance failed him, and his colour fled.

in the work, Ariosto alludes to them as well-known incidents in the romance writers. In an old romance, in ottava rima, intituled *Innamoramento di Rinaldo*, apparently much prior to Ariosto, is a long account of a Pagan king, named Mambrino, who comes against Charlemain and the Christians with a vast army. He is at last killed by Rinaldo, but no particular mention is made of his helmet. This helmet of Mambrino, said by Ariosto to be won by Rinaldo, is the same which the reader must recollect to have seen so frequently mentioned in *Don Quixote*, and for which the knight of la Mancha took possession of a barber's bason. See *Jarvis's Don Quixote*, Vol. I. B. iii. C. vii.

With respect to the death of Almontes, the following account is given in the romance poem of *Aspramonte*.

Almontes, son of Agolant, and brother to Troyano, having embarked from Africa to revenge the death of Garnieri king of Carthage, his grandfather, killed by Milo, father of Orlando, had performed many great actions and slain Milo. He one day came to a fountain called Sylvestra, which was said to be made by St. Silvester, and that by tasting these waters Constantine was converted. Almontes here fell asleep, and was soon after surprised by Charlemain. These two warriors then engaged in a dreadful combat, and Charlemain was very near being defeated, when Orlando, seeking Almontes, in order to revenge the death of his father, was met by a hermit, who incited him to go to the assistance of Charlemain. Orlando, having lost his sword, took an enormous mace or club from a dead Turk; and soon reached the fountain, where he attacked Almontes, who had just overpowered the emperor. Orlando, after an obstinate battle, killed Almontes, who, before his death, recollected the prophecy of his sister Galicella, that he should die by a fountain. Orlando then took possession of the armour of Almontes, which was enchanted, and of his horn, together with his horse Brigliadoro, and his sword Durindana, both so celebrated in Ariosto. See *Aspramonte*, Cant. xix.

But when he heard Argalia, whom he slew, 210
 (Argalia was the name the warrior knew)
 Reproach his tainted faith and breach of fame,
 His haughty bosom glow'd with rage and shame.
 Then by Lanfusa's life, a sacred vow
 He made, to wear no head-piece o'er his brow, 215
 But that which in fam'd Aspramont of yore,
 From fierce Almontes' head Orlando tore.
 And to this oath a due regard he paid,
 And kept it better than the first he made.
 Thence with sad steps in pensive mood he went, 220
 And long remain'd in sullen discontent.
 Now here, now there he seeks the Christian knight,
 And in his panting bosom hopes the fight.

Rinaldo, who a different path had try'd,
 As fortune led, full soon before him spy'd 225
 His gallant courser bounding o'er the plain—
 Stay, my Bayardo, stay—thy flight restrain :
 Much has thy want to-day perplex'd thy lord—
 The steed regardless of his master's word,

Ver. 210.—*Argalia*,—] For an account of the death of Argalia, see General View of *Boyardo's* Story.

Ver. 214.—*Lanfusa's life, a sacred vow*—] Lanfusa was the mother of Ferrau. Such kind of vows were common with the knights in romance: thus Don Quixote, in imitation of these, swears he will not rest till he has won a helmet by conquest. *Don Quix.* Part i. B. ii. C. ii.

Ver. 223.—*hopes the fight.*] We hear no more of Ferrau till the xliith book, ver. 169, where he is introduced as one of the knights confined in the enchanted palace of Atlantes.

Through the thick forest fled with speed renew'd, 230
While, fir'd with added rage, the knight pursu'd.

Now turn we to Angelica, who speeds
O'er savage wilds, and unfrequented meads ;
Nor thinks herself secure, but swiftly scuds
Through the deep mazes of surrounding woods ; 235

Ver. 232.—*Angelica, who speeds*] Tasso seems to have had a reference to this, and the former passage, ver. 95, in describing the flight of Erminia.

Mean while Erminia's rapid courser stray'd
Through the thick covert of the woodland shade ;
Her trembling hand the rein, no longer guides,
And through her veins a chilling terror glides.

Jerus. Del. B. vii. ver. 1.

Still flies the damsel to her fears resign'd,
Nor dares to cast a transient look behind :
All night she fled, and all th' ensuing day, &c.

Ver. 13.

But our countryman Spenser more immediately follows Ariosto, in his account of Florimel, on a like occasion, in his *Fairy Queen*.

Like as an hind forth singled from the herd,
That hath escaped from a ravenous beast,
Yet flies away, of her own feet affeard,
And every leaf, that shaketh with the least
Murmur of wind, her terror hath encreast :
So fled fair Florimel from her vain fear,
Long after she from peril was releast :
Each shade she saw, and each noise she did hear,
Did seem to be the same, which she escap'd whyleare.

All that same evening she in flying spent,
And all that night her course continued ;
Ne did she let dull sleep once to relent,
Nor weariness to slack her haste, but fled
Ever alike, as if her former dread
Were hard behind, her ready to arrest :
And her white palfrey having conquered
The maist'ring reins out of her weary wrist,
Perforce her carried wherever he thought best.

B. iii. C. vii.

Starts at the leaves that rustle with the wind,
And thinks the knight pursues her close behind :
Each shadow that in hill or vale appears,
Again recalls Rinaldo to her fears !
So when a fawn or kid by chance has found, 240
Amidst the covert of his native ground,
His hapless dam some furious leopard's prize,
Who tears her throat and haunches as she lies ;
Far from the dreadful sight, with terror chac'd,
From grove to grove he flies with trembling haste ; 245
While every bush he touches in his way,
He thinks the cruel savage gripes his prey.

Unconscious where she pass'd that day and night,
With half the next, the damsel urg'd her flight.
At length she came where rose a bowery shade, 250
Whose nodding branches to the breezes play'd :
Two purling streams adorn the sylvan scene,
And clothe the turf with never-fading green :
Along the meads they roll their easy tide,
The stones, with murmuring noise, their passage chide. 255

Here hop'd the fair a safe retreat to find,
And fondly deem'd Rinaldo far behind :
O'ercome with toil, with burning heat oppress'd,
She sought to ease her limbs with needful rest.
Then lighting on the ground, she loos'd the reins, 260
And gave her steed to graze th' enamell'd plains.
Not distant far, an arbour struck her view,
Where flowery herbs and blushing roses grew :
Close by the bower the glassy mirror flow'd :
The bower was shelter'd with a waving wood 265
Of lofty oaks ; the inner part display'd
A cool retreat amidst surrounding shade.

So thick the twining branches nature wove,
No sight, no sun could pierce the dusky grove:
A rising bank, with tender herbage spread, 270
Had form'd for soft repose a rural bed.
The lovely virgin here her limbs compos'd,
Till downy sleep her weary eyelids clos'd.
Not long she lay, for soon her slumber fled,
A trampling steed her sudden terror bred: 275
When, rising silent, near the river's side,
A graceful warrior, sheath'd in arms, she spy'd.
Uncertain if she view'd a foe or friend,
Alternate hopes and fears her bosom rend.

Th' approaching stranger now his steed forsook, 280
And stretch'd his careless limbs beside the brook,
His arm sustain'd his head, and, lost in thought,
He seem'd a statue by the sculptor wrought.
An hour and more (my lord) the pensive knight
With head reclin'd remain'd in mournful plight, 285
At length began with such a doleful strain,
To tell the list'ning woods his secret pain,
That parting rocks might tender pity show,
And savage tigers soften at his woe:
He sigh'd; his breast, like flaming Ætna glow'd, 290
While down his cheeks the tears like rivers flow'd.

Ah me! (he cry'd) whence comes this inward smart,
These thoughts that burn at once and freeze my heart!
What to a tardy wretch, like me, remains?
With happier speed the fruit another gains. 295
To me were scarcely words and looks address'd,
The last dear bliss another has possess'd.

Since then I neither fruit nor flowers enjoy,
 Why should her love in vain my peace destroy?
 The spotless maid is like the blooming rose 300
 Which on its native stem unsully'd grows;
 Where fencing walls the garden-space surround,
 Nor swains, nor browsing cattle tread the ground:
 The earth and streams their mutual tribute lend,
 Soft breathe the gales, the pearly dew descend: 305
 Fair youths and amorous maidens with delight
 Enjoy the grateful scent, and bless the sight.
 But if some hand the tender stalk invades,
 Lost is its beauty, and its colour fades:
 No more the care of heaven, or garden's boast, 310
 And all its praise with youths and maidens lost.
 So when a virgin grants the precious prize
 More choice than beauty, dearer than her eyes,
 To some lov'd swain; the power she once possess'd,
 She forfeits soon in every other breast; 315
 Since he alone can justly love the maid,
 To whom so bounteous she her love display'd.
 While others triumph in each fond desire,
 Relentless fortune! I with want expire.

Ver. 300. *The spotless maid.*] Imitated from Catullus.

Ut flos in septis secretus nascitur hortis,
 Ignotus pecori, nullo contusus aratro,
 Quem mulcent auræ, firmat sol, educat imber:
 Multi illum pueri, multæ optavere puellæ.
 Idem quum tenui carptus defloruit ungui,
 Nulli illum pueri, nullæ optavere puellæ:
 Si virgo dum intacta manet, tum cara suis, sed,
 Quum castum amisit polluto corpore florem,
 Nec pueris jucunda manet, nec cara puellis.

Carmen Nuptiale.

'Then shake this fatal beauty from thy mind, 320
 And give thy fruitless passion to the wind—
 Ah! no—this instant let my life depart,
 Ere her dear form is banish'd from my heart.

If any seek to learn the warrior's name
 Whose mournful tears increas'd the running stream, 325
 'Twas Sacripant, to hapless love a prey,
 Whose rule Circassia's ample realms obey:
 For fair Angelica his course he bends
 From eastern climes to where the sun descends.
 For pierc'd with grief, he heard in India's land 330
 With Brava's knight she sought the Gallic strand;
 And after heard in France, the blooming fair
 Was given by royal Charles to Namus' care;
 The wish'd-for prize the champion to reward,
 Whose arms should best the golden lily guard. 335
 Himself that fatal conflict had beheld,
 When Pagan arms the Christian forces quell'd:
 Since then through many a winding track he stray'd,
 And sought with fruitless care, the wandering maid.

Ver. 326. *'Twas Sacripant*.—] “ Sacripant, king of Circassia, one of the bravest and most faithful of Angelica's lovers. When this princess was besieged in Albracca by Agrican, he marched to her assistance with a numerous army, and performed many gallant actions before the walls. Agrican, having one night by surprise gained admittance into the city, with three hundred of his followers, Sacripant, who then lay dangerously wounded, sallied out, armed only with his sword and shield, and bravely repulsed them, till the whole army of Tartars entering the walls, he was compelled to retire into the fort, whence, at the request of Galaphron, he soon after set out to ask assistance from Gradasso, king of Sericane.”

Orlando Innam. Book I. C. x, xi.

Ver. 331.—*Brava's knight*.—] Orlando, so called from having the Marquisate of Brava.

While, grieving thus, in doleful state he lies, 340
The tears like fountains gushing from his eyes,
Beyond his wish, propitious fortune bears
His soft complainings to his mistress' ears.
Angelica attentive hears his moan,
Whose constant passion long the fair had known: 345
Yet, cold as marble, her obdurate breast
No kindly pity for his woes confess'd:
As one who treats mankind with like disdain,
Whose wayward love no merit could obtain:
But thus with perils clos'd on every side, 350
She thinks in him that Fortune might provide
A sure defence, her champion and her guide.
For who, when circling waters round him spread
And menace present death, implores not aid?
This hour neglected, never might she view 355
A knight again so valiant and so true.
Yet meant she ne'er t' assuage his amorous smart,
Who kept her deeply treasur'd in his heart;
And with that happiness his pains reward,
That happiness which lovers most regard: 360
Some other new-fram'd wile the fair design'd
To lure with hope his unsuspecting mind;
And, when her fears were past, return again
To all her cruelty and coy disdain.

Then, sudden issuing from the tufted wood, 365
Confess'd in open sight the virgin stood;
As, on the scene, from cave or painted grove,
Appears Diana, or the queen of love.

Hail! mighty warrior! (thus the damsel said)
May favouring heav'n afford me timely aid, 370

That you may still unsully'd keep my name,
Nor with suspicion wrong my spotless fame !

Struck with the vision, Sacripant amaz'd
On fair Angelica in rapture gaz'd :
Not with such joy a mother views again 375
Her darling offspring, deem'd in battle slain,
Who saw the troops without him home return'd,
And long his loss with tears maternal mourn'd.
The lover now advanc'd with eager pace,
To clasp his fair one with a warm embrace : 380
While she, far distant from her native seat,
Refus'd not thus her faithful knight to meet,
With whom she hop'd ere long her ancient realms to }
greet.

Then all her story she at full express'd,
Ev'n from the day, when urg'd by her request, 385
He parted, succours in the east to gain
From fam'd Gradasso king of Sericane :
How great Orlando did her steps attend,
And safe from danger and mischance defend ;
While, as she from her birth had kept unstain'd 390
Her virgin fame, he still that fame maintain'd.

This might be true, but one discreet and wise,
Would scarcely credit such a fond surmise :
Yet Sacripant with ease the maid believ'd,
For mighty Love had long his sense deceiv'd : 395
Love, what we see, can from our sight remove,
And things invisible are seen by Love.

What though Anglante's knight so long forbore
To seize the blest occasion in his power :
(Thus to himself in secret spoke the knight) 400
Shall I so coldly fortune's gifts requite ?
Or e'er repent I slighted beauty's charms
When the glad hour had giv'n them to my arms !
No---let me crop the fresh, the morning rose,
Whose budding leaves untainted sweets disclose. 405
Midst all disguise, full well the fair approve
The soft, the pleasing violence of love.
Then let no forg'd complaints my soul affright,
Nor threatenings rob me of the wish'd delight.

He said ; and for the soft attack prepar'd : 410
But soon a loud and sudden noise was heard :
The noise, resounding from the neighbouring grove,
Compell'd the knight to quit his task of love :
His ready helmet on his head he plac'd ;
His other parts in shining steel were cas'd : 415
Again with curbing bit his steed he rein'd,
Remounted swiftly and his lance regain'd.
Now, issuing from the wood, a knight is seen
Of warlike semblance and commanding mien :
Of dazzling white the furniture he wears, 420
And in his casque a snowy plume he bears.
But Sacripant, whom amorous thoughts employ,
Defrauded of his love and promis'd joy,
Beholds th' intruding champion from afar
With haughty looks, and eyes that menace war. 425
Approaching nearer he defies his force,
And hopes to hurl him headlong from his horse :

With threatening words the stranger makes return,
With equal confidence and equal scorn:
At once he spoke, and to the combat press'd, 430
His courser spurr'd and plac'd his lance in rest:
King Sacripant return'd with equal speed;
And each on each impel'd his rapid steed.
Not bulls or lions thus the battle wage
With teeth and horns, in mutual blood and rage, 435
As fought these eager warriors in the field:
Each forceful javelin pierc'd the other's shield
With hideous crash; the dreadful clangors rise,
Swell from the vales, and echo to the skies!
Through either's breast had pierc'd the pointed wood, 440
But the well-temper'd plates the force withstood,
The fiery coursers, long to battle bred,
Like butting rams, encounter'd head to head.
The stranger's with the shock began to reel,
But soon recover'd with the goring steel; 445
While on the ground the Pagan's breathless fell,
A beast that, living, serv'd his master well.
The knight unknown, beholding on the mead
His foe lie crush'd beneath the slaughter'd steed,
And deeming here no further glory due, 450
Resolv'd no more the contest to renew;
But turning swift, again pursu'd his way,
And left the fierce Circassian where he lay.
As when, the thunder o'er, the ether clears,
Slow rising from the stroke the hind appears, 455
Where stretch'd he lay all senseless on the plain,
Where fast beside him lay his oxen slain;
And see the pine, that once had rais'd in air
Its stately branches, now of honours bare:

So rose the Pagan from the fatal place, 460
His mistress present at the dire disgrace.
He sigh'd full deeply from his inmost heart,
Not for a wounded limb, or outward smart ;
But shame alone his tortur'd bosom tore,
A shame like this he ne'er confess'd before ; 465
And more he sorrow'd, when the damsel freed
His limbs encumber'd from the murder'd steed ;
Long time he silent stood with downcast look,
Till first Angelica the silence broke.

She thus began : Let not my lord bemoan 470
His courser's fatal error, not his own ;
For him had grassy mead been fitter far,
Or stalls with grain surcharg'd, than feats of war !
Yet little praise awaits yon haughty knight,
Nor can he justly glory in his might ; 475
For he, methinks, may well be said to yield,
Who first forsakes the fight and flies the field.

With words like these the drooping king she chear'd,
When from the woods a messenger appear'd ;
Tir'd with a length of way he seem'd to ride, 480
His crooked horn and wallet at his side :
When now, approaching to the Pagan knight,
He ask'd if he had seen, with buckler white,
And snowy plumage o'er his crest display'd,
A warrior passing through the forest shade. 485
To whom thus Sacripant in brief again ;
The knight you seek has stretch'd me on the plain :
But now he parted hence ; to him I owe
My sham'd defeat, nor yet my victor know.
I shall not, since you wish me to reveal, 490
(Reply'd the messenger) your foe conceal :

Know then, the fall you suffer'd in the fight,
A gallant virgin gave, unmatch'd in might,
Of fame for deeds of arms, of greater fame
For beauteous form, and Bradamant her name. 495

He said; and turn'd his courser from the place:
The Saracen, o'erwhelm'd with new disgrace,
All mute with conscious shame, dejected stood,
While o'er his features flush'd the mantling blood;
Till to the damsel's steed the knight address'd 500
His silent steps, and now the saddle press'd;
Then plac'd the fair Angelica behind,
Resolv'd some more secure retreat to find.

Ere far they rode, they heard a trampling sound,
That all the forest seem'd to shake around: 505
They look, and soon a stately steed behold,
Whose costly trappings shine with burnish'd gold;
He leaps the steepy mounds, and crossing floods,
And bends before his way the crashing woods.
Unless the mingled boughs, with dusky shade, 510
Deceive my erring sight (exclaim'd the maid)
I see Bayardo in yon gallant horse,
That through the woodland breaks his sounding course:
One palfrey could but ill two riders bear,
And fortune sends him to relieve our care. 515

King Sacripant, alighting on the plain,
Drew near, and thought secure to seize the rein;

Ver. 512.—*Bayardo*.—] Many wonders are told in the romances of this horse. It is said that he was found by Malagigi in a grotto, together with a suit of armour and the sword Fusberta, all under the guard of a horrible serpent, and that by his magic art he got possession of, and gave them to Rinaldo. See *Innamoramento di Rinaldo*, C. iv.

But swift as lightnings flash along the sky,
 With spurning heels Bayardo made reply.
 It chanc'd beside him the Circassian stood, 520
 Else had he mourn'd his rash attempt in blood;
 Such dreadful force was in the courser's heel,
 The stroke had burst a mount of solid steel.
 Then to Angelica with easy pace
 He moves, and humbly views her well-known face: 525
 A Spaniel thus, domestic at the board,
 Fawns after absence, and surveys his lord.
 The damsel was remember'd by the steed
 Wont at Albracca from her hands to feed,
 What time Rinaldo, courted by the maid, 530
 With foul ingratitude her love repay'd.
 Now boldly in her hand she took the rein,
 Strok'd his broad chest, and smooth'd his ruffled mane:
 While conscious he, with wond'rous sense indu'd,
 Still as a lamb, beside her gently stood, 535
 The watchful Pagan leap'd into the seat,
 And curb'd, with streighten'd reins, Bayardo's heat,
 The palfrey to Angelica remain'd, 540
 Who gladly thus her former place regain'd.

Ver. 529. *Wont at Albracca*—] Malagigi, who was made prisoner by Angelica, (see General View, &c.) being released upon his parole, endeavoured to persuade Rinaldo to return her love; but all his arguments proving ineffectual, he, in revenge, by a magical illusion, decoyed his cousin from the Christian camp: Bayardo, being left behind, came into the possession of Astolpho, who, going to the siege of Albracca, in aid of Angelica, was overthrown before the walls of that city, when his horse was seized by Agrican; who being afterwards slain, Bayardo came into the hands of Orlando, who had lost his horse Brigliadoro. Orlando at last having recovered his own, and departing from Cathay on a new adventure, left Bayardo in Albracca with Angelica, who soon after sent him to his master Rinaldo. See *Orlando Innam.*

Now as by chance she cast her eyes aside, 510
 A knight on foot in sounding arms she spy'd :
 When sudden terror on her face was shown,
 Soon as the knight for Amon's son was known.
 Long had he woo'd, but she detests his love ;
 Not swifter from the falcon flies the dove. 515
 He hated once, while she with ardor burn'd ;
 And now behold their several fortunes turn'd.
 This cause at first from two fair fountains came,
 Their waters different, but their look the same :
 Amidst the shade of Arden's dreary wood, 550
 Full in each other's view the fountains stood :
 Who drinks of one, inflames with love his heart,
 Who drinks the other stream contemns his dart :

Ver. 548.--*two fair fountains*.--] "As many of these specious and wonderful tales in romance writers are borrowed from Greek or Latin poets, so this story of the two fountains of Ardena, with their different effects, is borrowed from Claudian, in his description of the gardens of Venus.

Labuntur gemini fontes, hic dulcis, amarus
 Alter, et infusis corrumpit mella venenis :
 Unde Cupidineas arnavit fama sagittas.

Two fountains here, of different nature, rise :
 This dulcet draughts ; that bitter streams supplies :
 While here dire poison flows to taint the heart,
 Fame tells that Cupid tempers there his dart."

Upton, Notes on Spenser, B. iv. C. iii.

Spenser mentions one of these fountains in his *Fairy Queen*.

Much more of price, and of more gracious power,
 Is this, than that same water of Arden,
 The which Rinaldo drank in happy hour
 Described by that famous Tuscan pen :
 For that had might to change the hearts of men
 From love to hate.-----Book iv. C. iii.

Rinaldo tasted that, and inly burn'd ;
 The damsel this, and hate for love return'd. 555

Soon as Angelica beheld the knight,
 A sudden mist o'erspread her chearful sight ;
 While with a falt'ring voice and troubled look,
 To Sacripant with suppliant tone she spoke ;
 And begg'd him not th' approaching chief to meet, 560
 But turn his courser, and betimes retreat.

Does then my prowess (Sacripant replies)
 Appear so mean and worthless in your eyes,
 That you too feeble deem this slighted hand,
 The force of yonder champion to withstand? 565
 Have you forgot that memorable night
 When at Albracca I maintain'd the fight?
 In your defence, unarm'd, I durst oppose
 King Agrican, and brav'd a host of foes.

Not so (she said)—nor to reply she knew ; 570
 As thus she spoke Rinaldo nearer drew,

Ver. 566.—*that memorable night.*] See note on ver. 326. Concerning the force mentioned in Romances to have been set down before Albracca, Milton, to express the idea of a prodigious concourse, alludes to it in the following lines:

“ Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp
 When Agrican, with all his northern powers,
 Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
 The city of Galaphron, from thence to win
 The fairest of her sex, Angelica,
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
 Both Paynim and the Peers of Charlemain ;
 Such and so various was their chivalry.”

Parad. Reg. B. iii. ver. 338.

Who now began the Pagan king to threat,
Soon as his eyes the well-known courser met,
And that lov'd face he view'd, whose charms had fir'd
His ravish'd bosom, and his soul inspir'd. 575

But cease we here : the ensuing book shall tell
What strife between these haughty warriors fell.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

BATTLE betwixt Sacripant and Rinaldo. Angelica, flying, meets with a hermit, who, by a magical illusion, parts the two rivals. Rinaldo, returning to Paris, is sent by Charlemain on an embassy to England. Bradamant, seeking her lover Rogero, meets with Pinabello, from whom she hears a melancholy story of his misfortunes. She promises him assistance; and afterwards, being deceived, falls into a pit.

THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

AH! why so rare does cruel Love inspire
Two tender bosoms with a mutual fire!
Say, whence, perfidious, dost thou pleasure find
To sow dissention in the human mind?
In shallow waters when I fain would keep, 5
Thou, to my ruin, draw'st me to the deep:
From those, that love me, dost avert my love,
To place it where no sighs, no sufferings move!
Thou giv'st Angelica t' enslave the knight,
Yet mak'st him hateful in the virgin's sight: 10
But when she lov'd him, and his form admir'd,
He, with aversion, from her love retir'd.
With grief he now in flames unpity'd burns,
Thus equal fortune scorn for scorn returns.

Rinaldo furious thus---Base thief! alight! 15
Forsake my courser, and restore my right.

Ver. 11. *But when she lov'd him,--*] See General View of Boyardo's Story.

Think not such theft shall unreveng'd succeed,
Impending punishment awaits the deed :
But more—yon damsel to my arms resign ;
'Twere far unmeet such beauties should be thine. 20
Wer't not a shame, that hence a thief should bear
A steed so stately, and a maid so fair !

Thief! dost thou say!—take back th' opprobrious lye,
(With equal rage the Pagan made reply)
But, if we trust the common voice of fame, 25
'Tis thou far more deserv'st th' opprobrious name.
This instant shall the important strife decide,
Who merits best the courser, and the bride :
Yet this, so far our thoughts conform, I own,
No equal to her charms the world has known. 30

As when two hungry mastives from afar,
By hate or envy mov'd, prepare for war ;
Slowly they meet, their threatening teeth they show,
With livid fire their glaring eye-balls glow :
At last with snarls the bitter fray they wage, 35
And bite and tear in mutual blood and rage.
So, after piercing taunts and vengeful words,
The mighty warriors drew their shining swords.

One urg'd the conflict from the courser's height,
One on his feet below maintain'd the fight : 40
Nor think the horseman could th' advantage boast,
His force was useless and his prowess lost ;
For well, by nature taught, the faithful steed
Against his lord refus'd his strength and speed :

Ver. 44. *Against his lord refus'd*] In the Orlando Innamorato, Orlando, who had lost his horse Brigliadoro, having got possession of Bayardo, and engaging in combat with Rinaldo, a contest arising

Nor could Circassia's prince, by skill or force, 45
 With spur or bit direct the restiff horse.
 Now prone to earth his head Bayardo thrust;
 Now wheel'd around; now furious spurn'd the dust;
 When haughty Sacripant in vain had try'd
 Each vary'd art to tame his headstrong pride, 50
 His hand he laid upon the saddle-bow,
 And swift alighted on the plain below.
 The Pagan, thus escap'd Bayardo's might,
 Between the chiefs ensu'd a dreadful fight.
 Now high, now low, their rapid steel they ply; 55
 While from their arms the fiery sparkles fly!
 Not swifter the repeated strokes go round,
 Which hollow Ætna's winding caves resound,
 When Vulcan bids the ponderous hammers move,
 To forge the thunder and the bolts of Jove. 60
 Sometimes they feign a stroke; sometimes they stay;
 Then aim the thrust, as skilful in the play.
 Sometimes they rise; then stoop upon the field;
 Now open lie; then crouch beneath the shield;
 Now ward; then with a slip elude the blow; 65
 Now forward step; then backward from the foe:
 Now round they move; and where the one gives place,
 The other presses on with eager pace.

between them, the horse refuses, in the same manner as here, to fight against his master. B. i. C. xxvi.

“These kind of tales told of the great sagacity of horses, and the love which they bear their masters, have more than poetical warrant for their truth; for historians relate the same of the horses of Alexander and Julius Cæsar.”

Upton, notes on Spenser, B. v. C. iii.

Brave Amon's son*, collecting all his might,
His weapon rais'd to strike the Pagan knight ; 70
When Sacripant to meet the falchion, held,
Compos'd of bone and steel, his ample shield :
The sword Fusberta, rushing from on high,
Pierc'd the tough plates ; the sounding woods reply ;
The bone and steel, like ice, in shivers broke ; 75
His arm benumb'd confess'd the dreadful stroke.

This, when the fair and fearful damsel view'd,
And well perceiv'd the mischief that ensu'd,
A death-like paleness chac'd her rosy bloom,
Like one who trembling waits his fatal doom. 80
She thinks the time admits of no delay,
And fears that hour to be Rinaldo's prey ;
Rinaldo, hateful to her virgin breast,
Though love of her his amorous soul distress'd.
She turn'd her palfrey to the woods in haste, 85
And through a narrow thorny passage pass'd,
While oft she cast behind her timorous view,
And deem'd she heard Rinaldo close pursue.
Not far she fled, but where a valley lay,
She met an aged hermit on the way : 90

* Rinaldo.

Ver. 73. *The sword Fusberta*,—] This strange affectation of giving names to swords was common with them ; thus Joyosa is the name of Charlemain's sword, in *Aspramonte* ; Chrysaor, is the name of Arthegal's sword, in Spenser ; Caliburn, of King Arthur's, in the romance of that name ; Ascalon, of St. George's, in the Seven Champions ; Tranchera, of Agrican's, in Boyardo ; and in Ariosto, besides Fusberta, we have Rogero's Balisarda, and Orlando's Durindana. In Spenser, Arthur's sword is called Mordure ; and his shield or banner, Pridwen, and his spear, Roan, by the romance writers.

His beard descending on his breast was seen,
Severe his aspect, and devout his mien.

He seem'd with years and frequent fasting worn,
And gently on a slow-pac'd ass was borne :

While all his form bespoke a pious mind, 95
From the vain follies of the world refin'd :

Yet, when the fair and blooming maid appear'd,
So much her looks his drooping spirits chear'd ;
Though cold and feeble, as his age requir'd,
An unknown warmth his languid pulse inspir'd. 100

Of him the damsel sought the nearest way
To where in port some ready vessel lay,
That there embarking, she might quit the shore,
And never hear Rinaldo mention'd more.

The hermit, vers'd in magic, strove to cheer 105
The virgin's thoughts, and dissipate her fear ;
Drew from his side a book his skill to prove,
With promise every danger to remove.

A leaf he'd scarce perus'd, when to their sight,
In likeness of a page, appear'd a spright ; - 110
Who, by the force of strong enchantment bound,
Went where the knights in cruel strife he found ;
And when his eyes the furious fight espy'd,
Between them boldly rush'd and loudly cry'd.

Tell me, ye warriors! what avails the strife, 115
Though either should deprive his foe of life ;
If without sword unsheath'd, without the fear
Of shatter'd armour, or the lifted spear,
Orlando now to Paris safe conveys
The maid, whose charms your fond contention raise?

Ver. 114. — *and loudly cry'd.*] The poet returns to Angelica,
Book viii. ver. 199.

Not hence a mile, the couple I descry'd,
 Whose bitter taunts your empty pains deride.
 Attend my counsel—cease your fruitless fight,
 And, while occasion serves, pursue their flight:
 For know, if Paris' walls they safely gain, 125
 Henceforth your hopes to see your love are vain.

He said: the gallant knights on either hand,
 Struck with the news, abash'd and silent stand;
 Condemning each his judgment and his eyes,
 That thus their rival should obtain the prize. 130
 At length, a sigh deep-issuing from his breast,
 His steps Rinaldo to his steed address'd;
 And vow'd, o'ercome with anger and disdain,
 To glut his vengeance on Orlando slain;
 Nor bade farewell, nor with a courteous mind, 135
 He proffer'd once to take the knight behind.

Urg'd by the well-known spur, the fiery steed
 Bore all before him that oppos'd his speed:
 Nor trench, nor steepy mound, nor thorny shade,
 Nor crossing flood, Bayardo's passage stay'd. 140
 Deem it not strange Rinaldo seiz'd again
 The generous courser sought so long in vain;
 Who, fraught with human sense, when first he view'd
 The trembling damsel's flight her track pursu'd.
 Not idly from the Christian camp he fled, 145
 But to regain the maid his master led,
 Who then, on foot, a dreadful combat wag'd
 With a fierce baron, hand to hand engag'd:

Ver. 136.—*the knight behind.*] We hear again of Sacripant in the ivth Book, ver. 313, where he is delivered by Bradamant, with the other knights, from the castle of Atlantes.

Ver. 148. *With a fierce baron,*—] Rogero, with whom Rinaldo fought at the last general battle. See General View of Boyardo's Story.

The faithful steed, to guide him where she went,
His course sagacious to the forest bent: 150

Nor suffer'd yet his generous lord to ride,
Lest he should turn him from his path aside.
By him Rinaldo twice the fair o'ertook,
And twice the fair his eager sight forsook:
For first Ferrau, as late my tale disclos'd, 155
Then Sacripant his amorous hopes oppos'd.

Bayardo now, confiding in the spright,
Whose specious falsehood had amus'd the knight,
Pursu'd his way, and patient of command,
Obey'd the spur, and answer'd to the hand. 160

Rinaldo, fir'd with love and stern disdain,
To Paris flies, and gives up all his rein:
So deep the tidings rankled in his thought,
Which the vain phantom of the hermit brought.
Nor ceas'd his eager journey morn or night, 165
Till the near city rose before his sight;

Where Charlemain, with his defeated crew,
Th' unhappy remnants of his strength withdrew:
A siege expecting now, he bends his care,
Supplies of stores and forces to prepare. 170

He sinks the trenches, fortifies the walls,
And every aid, in time of danger, calls;
Provides an embassy to England's shore,
With speed auxiliar prowess to implore:
Resolv'd again to tempt the doubtful field, 175
And try what war another day might yield;

Then sends Rinaldo to the British clime,
Known by fair England's name in future time.
Sore griev'd the Paladin at this command,
Not that he shunn'd to tread the British land, 180

But that the hasty charge his prince enjoin'd,
 Bade him, reluctant, leave the fair behind;
 Yet, as his duty call'd, he takes his way,
 And speeds to Calais, restless of delay.

The knight, impatient to return again, 185
 Against the counsels of the sailor-train,
 Tempts the black sea, that wears a threatening form,
 And, murmuring hoarse, forebodes the future storm.
 The wind, who sees the knight his power despise,
 In dreadful tempests makes the billows rise, 190
 And with such fury whirls them from below,
 That o'er the mast th' insulting waters flow.
 The skilful mariners, with busy care,
 Strike their broad sails to shun the watery war;
 And think th' abandon'd harbour to regain, 195
 Whence, in ill hour, they dar'd to brave the main.
 Fools! never hope (the wind indignant cry'd)
 Unpunish'd thus my empire to deride!
 Raging he speaks, and makes the crew obey
 On pain of shipwreck, as he points the way. 200
 Before, behind, unwearied howls the blast:
 With humble sails the wandering vessel pass'd,
 Now here, now there, amidst the watery waste. }

But since a web so various I prepare,
 Where every thread by turns demand my care, 205
 I leave Rinaldo in the stormy main,
 And turn to noble Bradamant the strain.

The warlike virgin, whose resistless might,
 Had from his courser thrown Circassia's knight.
 Not Charlemain, or joyful France, survey'd 210
 With less delight the valour of the maid,
 Than the known prowess of Rinaldo's arms,
 Such martial fire her daring bosom warms !
 To her a gentle youth affection bore,
 Who came with Agramant from Afric's shore ; 215
 Whom Agolant's unhappy daughter bred,
 The vigorous offspring of Rogero's bed ;
 And she, nor nurs'd in wilds, nor savage-born,
 Receiv'd not love like his with maiden scorn ;
 Though fortune yet had giv'n the dame and knight 220
 But once to speak and meet each other's sight.

Ver. 214. *To her a gentle youth—*] For the loves of Rogero and Bradamant, see General View of Boyardo's Story.

Ver. 216. *Whom Agolant's unhappy daughter—*] For the genealogy of Rogero, take the following fictitious account from Boyardo.

“ After the Grecians had taken Troy, and put most of their prisoners to the sword, among whom was Polyxena, daughter of Priam and Hecuba, who was sacrificed at the tomb of Achilles; in order entirely to extirpate the race of Hector, they sought for Astyanax; but Andromache, to preserve his life, concealed him in a sepulchre, and took another child in her arms, with whom being found, they were both put to death. In the mean time, the real Astyanax was safely conveyed, by a friend of his father, to the island of Sicily, when, being grown to man's estate, he conquered Corinth and Argos: he established a government at Messina, and married the queen of Syracuse, but was afterwards killed by treachery, and his widow, being driven from the city by the Greeks, took shelter in Risa, where she was delivered of a son named Polydore, from whom descended Clovis and Constantius. Constantius was the head of the line of Pepin, father of Charlemain; and from Clovis came Rogero, who married Galicella, daughter of Agolant: Rogero, being cruelly murdered, and his city destroyed, his wife fled to the coast of Africa, where she was delivered of two children, a boy and a girl, and died soon after: the boy, called Rogero, was brought up by Atlantes, a magician. See *Orlando Innam.* B. ii. C. i. &c.

Now Bradamant explores with fond desire
Her lover, call'd Rogero from his sire ;
And unaccompany'd securely far'd,
As if a thousand squadrons were her guard. 225
Soon as her arm had cast in single fight,
Low on his mother earth Circassia's knight ;
A wood she travers'd, then a mountain pass'd,
And to a limpid river came at last,
That through the mead its gentle current drew, 230
Where ancient trees with spreading branches grew.
A pleasing noise the murm'ring waters made,
Inviting swains to drink beneath the shade :
A rising hillock on the left was seen,
That fenc'd from noon-tide heat the chearful green. 235

Here, as the virgin turn'd her eyes aside,
On the fair bank a comely youth she spy'd :
Fast by the margin of the flood he lay,
The margin with a thousand colours gay.
Alone and silent in a pensive mood, 240
With steadfast gaze the crystal stream he view'd :
Not distant far a tree his courser held,
Aloft were hung his helmet and his shield :
His eyes were moist with tears, his head declin'd,
Sad indications of a troubled mind. 245

Urg'd by desire which prompts each generous heart
In others woes to bear a friendly part,
The virgin begs th' afflicted knight to show
His secret state, and whence his sorrows flow :
To whom the stranger all his grief display'd, 250
Mov'd with the courteous speeches of the maid,
And by her looks misled, that seem'd to tell
Some gallant warrior prov'd in battle well.

Thus he--Know, gentle knight, a valiant crew
Of horse and foot, in aid of Charles, I drew, 255
When near Pyrene's hills the Christian force
Encamp'd t' oppose Marsilius in his course.
With me a damsel went, from whom my breast
Had long the powerful fire of love confess'd :
When, lo ! we saw near Rhodan's rapid tide 260
A knight all-arm'd a flying steed bestride.
Soon as the robber (whether hellish spright
That with a human form deceiv'd the sight,
Or mortal born) beheld my blooming fair,
Swift as a falcon through the yielding air, 265
He flew, and seiz'd her trembling with dismay,
Then bore her sudden in his arms away :
Unconscious of my loss, till with surprise
I heard in air her lamentable cries.
So from the clouds descends the ravening kite, 270
And gripes the chicken in his mother's sight.
What could I do, alas ! encompass'd round
With steepy mountains and a rocky ground ?
His courser flew, when mine, oppress'd with toil,
Could scarcely move amidst the stony soil. 275
Wild with my fate, I rov'd with frantic mind,
Careless of life, and left my men behind :
Thence turning o'er the craggy deserts stray'd,
While love's blind impulse blindly I obey'd.
Six tedious days, from morn to eve, I pass'd 280
O'er many a pendent cliff and horrid waste ;
A pathless way, uncultur'd and forlorn,
Where not a track of human feet was worn.

Ver. 261.--*a flying steed.*—] The fiction of this griffin-horse is Ariosto's own, nothing like it occurring in Boyardo.

At length a wild and lonely vale I found,
With hills and dreadful caves encompass'd round. 285
Here, in the midst, a wond'rous rock I view'd,
On which a strong and stately castle stood :
It seem'd afar to shine like glowing flame ;
Nor harden'd earth, nor stone compos'd the frame.
As nearer to the mountain's base we drew, 290
The beauteous pile more struck my raptur'd view.
This fort, the demons, from th' infernal plains
By fuming incense drawn and magic strains,
Enclos'd with steel, to which the Stygian wave,
And Stygian fire eternal temper gave : 295
A dazzling polish brighten'd ev'ry tower,
Which spots could ne'er defile nor rust devour.

The robber scours the country day and night,
Then, with his prey, he thither bends his flight :
Thither my fair, my better part he bore, 300
And never, never must I view her more !
What hope remain'd ! In vain with longing eyes,
I see the place where all my treasure lies !
The rock so high and steep, who enters there,
Must learn to wing his passage through the air. 305
So when the mother-fox, with anguish stung,
Hears in the eagle's nest her crying young ;
She circles round the tree, with wild affright,
No wings vouchsaf'd her for so vast a flight.

While in suspense I stood, from far I spy'd 310
Two champions and a dwarf that seem'd their guide ;

Ver. 311. *Two champions and a dwarf.*—] Boyardo tells us, that after the deliverance of Orlando, Gradasso and Rogero were led by a dwarf to an adventure of a castle, which seems to be the story here continued by our poet. See *Orlando Innam.* B. iii. C. vi, vii.

These with the hopes of praise had fir'd their mind,
But soon these hopes dissolv'd in empty wind.

'They both were warriors of establish'd fame:

A monarch one, Gradasso was his name; 315

The other was a youth of courage prov'd,

Rogero, in Biserta's court belov'd.

They come (declar'd the dwarf) to try their power

Against the lord of this enchanted tower,

Who through the air, enclos'd in armour bright, 320

Directs his wondrous courser's rapid flight.

Then I---Vouchsafe, O generous knights! to hear

A wretch's fond complaints with pitying ear;

Or if in fight your arms victorious prove,

(As sure I trust they shall) restore my love. 325

Then all my griefs I spoke; while tears that roll'd

Down my wan cheek, confirm'd the tale I told.

With courteous words they answer'd my request,

And down the mountain to the castle press'd:

Aloof I stood the battle to survey, 330

Beseeching Heaven to aid the doubtful day.

Meanwhile the warriors to the rock drew nigh,

Disputing who should first th' adventure try.

At length Gradasso (whether lots design'd,

Or else Rogero to his will inclin'd) 335

Lifts to his mouth the horn: the cliffs around,

The rock and fortress to the noise resound!

When, lo! the magic knight, with instant speed,

Rush'd from the portal on the flying steed.

At first he seems by slow degrees to rise: 340

Like cranes, prepar'd to sail to foreign skies,

Till, with collected wind, at once they spring

Aloft in air, and shoot upon the wing.

With such a flight the necromance towers,
That scarce so high th' ethereal eagle soars ! 345
But, when he sees his 'vantage best below,
With closing pinions on th' unwary foe,
He sinks precipitate--as from above
Descends the manag'd falcon on the dove.
And ere Gradasso can perceive his flight, 350
He feels the spear with dreadful strength alight :
The spear breaks short ; Gradasso strikes again ;
But furious strikes the yielding air in vain.
The stern magician fearless on the wind
Ascending, leaves the champions far behind. 355
The good Alfana, with the force oppress'd,
Reclin'd on earth awhile the shock confess'd :
Alfana was the mare Gradasso rein'd,
The fairest beast that ever knight sustain'd.
And now the sorc'rer mounts the starry skies, 360
Then wheels around, and down again he flies ;
Now on Rogero falls, who seeks to bring
His needful succour to th' astonish'd king.
The swift assault disturbs the youthful knight,
While scarce his horse supports th' unequal fight ; 365
And when he turns to strike, he sees the foe
Ride on the clouds and mock the frustrate blow.
In ample circles round he steers his course,
And threatening one, on t' other bends his force :
No pause he gives, but rushing by surprise, 370
Confounds their senses and distracts their eyes.

Ver. 356. *The good Alfana*,--] Alfana, the name of a wild breeding mare. It was very unusual for the knights in romance to make use of mares, esteeming it derogatory from their dignity ; but Gradasso is said to have taken an oath, never to mount a horse till he could get possession of Bayardo, Rinaldo's horse.

Thus did these three the doubtful strife maintain,
 That high in air, these lowly on the plain;
 Till rising night her dusky veil display'd,
 And wrapt each object in surrounding shade. 375

Think not my words in artful fiction drest,
 Whate'er I speak was to my view confest:
 Yet, with reluctance now, my tongue declares
 A tale that such a face of falsehood wears.

On his left arm the foe was seen to wield, 380
 Clos'd in a silken case, a mighty shield;
 Whose polish'd orb, whene'er reveal'd to sight,
 The gazer strikes with such a powerful light;
 In death-like slumber on the ground he lies,
 And to the foe becomes an easy prize! 385
 Bright as Pyropus shines the buckler's blaze;
 No mortal e'er beheld such dazzling rays;
 Full in their eyes the flashing splendor play'd,
 And prone on earth each knight was senseless laid.
 Like theirs, a sudden sleep my senses bound; 390
 But when, at length, recovering from the ground

Ver. 386. *Bright as Pyropus*—] Prince Arthur's shield in Spenser is something of this kind, which is always kept covered with a veil.

His warlike shield all closely cover'd was,
 Ne might of mortal eye be ever seen,

.

The same to wight he never wont disclose,
 But when as monsters huge he would dismay,
 Or daunt unequal armies of his foes;
 Or when the flying heav'nus he would affray:
 For so exceeding shone his glist'ring ray,
 That Phœbus' golden face it did attain,
 As when a cloud his beams doth over-lay, &c.

Fairy Queen, B. i. C. vii.

I rose, and sought the knights and dwarf again;
 Dark was the mount and desolate the plain!
 Th' un pitying foe had seiz'd the hapless pair,
 And borne them to his castle through the air. 395
 Thus by the light, that o'er their eyes he spread,
 Their liberty is gone, my hopes are fled!

Prince Arthur being engaged with the Soldan, discovers his shield, in order to dazzle the eyes of the Soldan's horses.

At last from his victorious shield he drew
 The veil, which did his powerful light impeach,
 And coming full before his horses' view,
 As they upon him press'd, it plain to them did shew.
 Like light'ning flash that hath the gazer burn'd,
 So did the sight thereof their sense dismay,
 That back again upon themselves they turn'd,
 And with their rider ran perforce away, &c.

B. v. C. viii.

Perhaps, as Mr. Upton observes, the original may be found in the *Ægis* of the Greeks.

Phæbus himself the rushing battle led;
 A veil of clouds involv'd his radiant head:
 High held before him, Jove's enormous shield
 Portentous shone, and shaded all the field.
 Vulcan to Jove th' immortal gift consign'd,
 To scatter hosts, and terrify mankind.

Again.....

As long as Phæbus bore unmov'd the shield,
 Sate doubtful conquest hov'ring o'er the field:
 But when aloft he shakes it in the skies,
 Shouts in their ears, and lightens in their eyes,
 Deep horror seizes ev'ry Grecian breast, &c.

Pope's Iliad, B. iv. ver. 348...360.

Ver. 395. *And borne them to his castle—*] The idea of this castle seems to be taken from the *Orlando Innamorato*, where we meet with a garden, made by Atlantes, on the summit of a rock, on mount Carena, in Africa, surrounded with a wall of glass, in which he kept Rogero, to preserve him from the evil influence of his stars.

Then from the place despairing I withdrew,
But ere I parted took a last adieu :
Now judge, what woes with mine can equal prove 400
Of all the various woes that spring from love.

Thus said the knight, and thus his fortune mourn'd,
Then pensive to his silent grief return'd :
This was that earl, whole birth Maganza claim'd,
Anselmo's son, and Pinabello nam'd ; 405
Who, like his race for wicked actions known,
Increas'd his kindred vices by his own.

The warlike virgin with attention stood,
While Pinabello his complaint pursu'd :
When first Rogero's much-lov'd name she heard, 410
A sudden gladness in her looks appear'd ;
But when she found a base magician's pow'r
Detain'd him thus ignobly in a tower,
Her pitying bosom glow'd with anxious pain,
And oft she begg'd to hear the tale again. 415

Then full inform'd : Sir knight (she cry'd) give o'er
This unavailing grief, and mourn no more.
Since from our meeting here, perchance may flow
Your happiness, and ruin to your foe.
Haste ; to the castle be our course address'd, 420
Whose walls are with so rich a treasure blest :

Ver. 398. *Then from the place—*] The allegory of the shield and castle is thus explained by the Italian commentators. The shield shews, how the eyes of the understanding are blinded by the desire of concupiscence ; or represents the violence and frauds, which worldly passions employ over reason and true virtue : the castle represents the carnal appetite, that holds men prisoners, as some say, that by Atlantes is figured love.

Nor shall we find in vain our labour spent,
If favouring fortune answer my intent.

And shall I, then, your luckless feet to guide,
Again those mountains pass? (the youth reply'd) 425
For me, indeed, but little were the smart
To toil my body, having lost my heart.

Yet why should you steep rocks and barren plains
Thus rashly tread, to purchase slavish chains?
Hence, warn'd in time, if evil chance ensues, 430
Not me unjustly, but yourself accuse.

Thus having said, he mounts without delay
To lead the noble damsel on the way;
Who for Rogero means the fight to prove,
And hazard life or freedom for her love. 435
When lo! a messenger that swiftly rode,
Pursu'd them close behind, and call'd aloud:
The same, who told king Sacripant the force
Of Bradamant had hurl'd him from his horse,
Who from Montpellier and Narbona came, 440
With sudden tidings to the martial dame,
That all the land was kindled with alarms,
And all the coast of Acquamort in arms:
That, losing her, their safety and their guard,
Marseilles was for the foes but ill prepar'd; 445
And, by this message, with their fears dismay'd,
Implor'd her counsel and immediate aid.

Struck with the virtues of her dauntless mind,
The king to Amon's daughter had assign'd
This town, and many miles extent, that lay 450
Twixt Vare and Rodon stretching to the sea.

These tidings heard, a doleful pause ensu'd,
And undetermin'd for a while she stood:

On that side honour and her friends assail'd;
On this the stronger fires of love prevail'd. 455
At length resolv'd to end the task design'd,
And free Rogero in the tower confin'd;
Or, if her enterprise successless prov'd,
Remain a prisoner with the youth she lov'd.
The damsel first excus'd a short delay, 460
Then sent the messenger well-pleas'd away.

Now, turning round, her former path she took;
Her Pinabel pursu'd with alter'd look;
Conscious her lineage to that house she ow'd,
For which he ever nourish'd hate avow'd; 465
And anxious fears perplex'd his troubled mind,
Lest she should know him of Maganza's kind.
An ancient feud between these houses reign'd,
And both the strife and hatred still maintain'd;
Full oft oppos'd in stern debate they stood, 470
And dy'd the ground beneath with mutual blood.
For this the caitiff bent his thoughts to frame
Some treason to deceive th' unwary dame.

Such various passions had disturb'd his breast,
With enmity, with doubts and fears possest, 475
Unheeding where he pass'd, he lost his way,
And through a gloomy forest chanc'd to stray;
Where in the midst a steepy mount appear'd,
That in a craggy rock its summit rear'd.
Meanwhile the dame of Clarmont's noble kind, 480
With heedful steps pursu'd the knight behind.

When Pinabel beheld the dusky shade,
He ponder'd in his thoughts to leave the maid;
And thus began—While yet we view the light,
'Twere best to seek a shelter from the night: 485

Beyond that hill, unless my mem'ry fail,
'There stands a stately castle in the vale:
Here patient wait, while from yon height I try
T' explore the prospect with a surer eye.

So saying, to the hill he bent his course, 490
And up the steepy summit spurr'd his horse;
Thence, looking round, he sought some path to take,
By which he might the damsel's track forsake:
When sudden here a monstrous cave he found,
Hewn out with labour in the stony ground: 495
Full thirty cubits deep it seem'd in show:
A fair and lofty gate appear'd below,
Which, by its ample structure, seem'd design'd
For entrance to some larger place behind,
And through the shade a glimmering brightness gave, 500
As of a torch that burnt within the cave.

While here in deep suspense the traitor stood,
The cautious virgin, who his steps pursu'd,
Fearful to lose the track, still kept in view
Her faithless guide, and near the cavern drew. 505

His first design thus foil'd, a sudden thought
Of treacherous purpose in his bosom wrought:
He makes the damsel from her steed alight,
And pointing out the cavern to her sight,
'Tells her within its confines he had seen, 510
A dame of beauteous face and graceful mien;
Whose courtly looks and costly garments show'd
Her birth deriv'd from no ignoble blood:
But from her eyes she pour'd a tender shower,
And seem'd her lost condition to deplore. 515
And when he thought t' attain a nearer view,
And learn the cause from which her grief she drew,

One from the inner grot with fury came,
And seizing carry'd off the weeping dame.

The dauntless Bradamant, whose generous mind, 520
Unconscious of the wile the wretch design'd,
With ardor glow'd to give the fair one aid,
Revolves how best she may the cave invade.
When on a lofty elm she cast her eyes,
And midst the boughs a mighty branch espies : 525
This with her sword she hews, and lops the leaves,
That done, the cavern's mouth the pole receives.
She prays her treacherous guide aloft to stand,
And grasp the end, tenacious, in his hand.
Now first within the cave her feet descend, 530
While as she sinks, her arms her weight suspend :
When Pinabello, scoffing, ask'd the maid
To leap below—then loos'd his grasp, and said :
O ! would that all thy race with thee were join'd,
That thus I might at once destroy the kind. 535

But happier fortune than the traitor meant,
All gracious Heaven, to save the guiltless, sent :
The pole first lighted on the ground below,
And instant shiver'd with the forceful blow ;

Ver. 523. *Revolves how best she may the cave invade.*] One of the most favourite achievements of the knights of old was to search into caverns, where they met with many wonderful adventures. Thus Don Quixote descends into the cave of Montesinos, and, at his return, relates many extravagant incidents, which his distempered imagination had furnished him with in the true spirit of romance.

Don Quixote, Part ii. C. xxii.

Yet thus the fury of the shock sustain'd, 540
That Bradamant preserv'd from death remain'd.

The sudden fall awhile surpris'd the maid,
As in th' ensuing book is full display'd.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

BRADAMANT, deceived by Pinabello, finds herself in Merlin's cave, where she meets with Melissa, who shews to her, in vision, all her descendants that were to make a figure in history. In this passage the poet pays a compliment to the most illustrious Italian families. Melissa then instructs Bradamant how to deliver Rogero from the castle in which he was confined by Atlantes, and dismisses her.

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

WHAT power will teach me lofty words to find
For the great subject that inflames my mind?
What power will lend my venturous muse a wing
In tuneful lays my high conceits to sing?
A vigour mightier far must here be shown 5
Than e'er my swelling bosom yet has known:
This verse my patron claims, which dares to trace
The fountain whence he draws his glorious race!

Amidst th' illustrious chiefs by fate design'd
With righteous government to bless mankind, 10

Ver. 1. *What power will teach---*] This invocation of Ariosto is apparently translated by Spenser in his *Fairy Queen*:

Who now shall give unto me words and sound
Equal unto this haughty enterprise?
Or who shall lend me wings, with which from ground
My lowly verse may loftily arise,
And lift itself unto the highest skies?

O Phœbus! you, whose eye the world surveys,
 Ne'er view'd a line like this, whose deathless praise,
 In peace and war, shall fill the lips of fame;
 Whose blooming honours shall endure the same,
 (Or vain the light prophetic in my soul) 13
 While Heaven, unchanging, whirls around the pole.
 To blazon all their virtues would require
 Not my weak lute, but that immortal lyre,
 On which, the giants quell'd, you sung above
 The grateful praises of eternal Jove! 20
 O! should you here the wish'd-for aid impart,
 And to the subject raise the sculptor's art;
 Each noble image shall my fancy fill,
 To challenge all my genius, all my skill;
 Then what at first I may but roughly trace, 25
 By slow degrees shall ripen into grace;
 Till crown'd by you, I see with joyful eyes
 Each labour'd form to full perfection rise.

But let the muse to him the story bend,
 Whose breast, nor shield, nor cuirass could defend; 30
 The treacherous Pinabel, who hop'd in vain
 With murderous guile the damsel to have slain.

More ample spirit than hitherto was wont
 Here needs me, while the famous ancestries
 Of my most dreaded sovereign I recount,
 By which all earthly princes she doth far surmount.

Again.....

Argument worthy of Mæonian quill,
 Or rather worthy of great Phœbus' rote,
 Whereon the ruins of great Ossa hill,
 And triumph of Phlegræan Jove he wrote.

The traitor deem'd her in the cavern dead,
 And, with a visage pale through guilty dread,
 The place, polluted by his crime, forsook, 35
 Then instant speeding back, his courser took :
 That every action might his soul betray,
 He with him bears the virgin's steed away.
 But leave we him, who while his craft is shown
 To seek another's fall, procures his own ; 40
 And turn to her, who nearly scap'd the doom,
 In one sad hour to find her death and tomb.
 Soon as the maid again from earth was rais'd,
 With the hard shock and sudden fall amaz'd,
 She enter'd boldly through the gate, which gave 45
 An entrance to the second, larger cave.
 The building, square within, and spacious made,
 A stately temple to the sight display'd.
 Magnificent the sumptuous pile appear'd,
 On pillars fair of alabaster rear'd. 50
 An altar in the midst; and kindled bright,
 A lamp before, cast round a trembling light.
 Soon as the damsel view'd, with pious mind,
 This sacred place for holy rites design'd,
 Devoutly on her knees the earth she press'd, 55
 And to the king of Heaven her prayers address'd.
 Meantime a sudden jarring sound was heard,
 When from a narrow gate a dame appear'd,

Ver. 39. *But leave we him,--*] The story of Pinabello is continued,
 B. xx. ver. 803.

Ver. 58.—*a dame appear'd,*] Melissa, an enchantress; a character introduced by Ariosto, who, throughout the poem, interests herself in all the concerns of Rogero and Bradamant.

Ungirt, with feet unshod, with hair display'd,
Who, by her name address'd the warrior-maid. 60

And thus, O generous Bradamant! (she said)
Not without Heaven's appointment hither led,
Merlin foretold, that by a passage new
Thou shouldst, descending here, his relics view;
And hence I stay'd, to set before thy eyes 65
The glorious fate predestin'd in the skies.
Behold this ancient cave, by Merlin wrought,
Merlin, in every art of magic taught:
Here with bewitching looks, and wiles prepar'd,
The lady of the lake his heart ensnar'd. 70

Ver. 67.--*by Merlin wrought,*] According to Jeffery of Monmouth, the famous magician Merlin was born at Kaermardin, i. e. Caermarthen, named by Ptolemy, Maridunum. Merlin's mother, who was a niece and daughter of the king of Demetia, (or South Wales) giving an account of her wonderful conception of her son, a philosopher explains it, that it was some demon, or incubus, "some guileful spright," partaking partly of the nature of man, partly of angels, and assuming a human shape, which begot Merlin; and this explains what Ariosto says, that Merlin was the son of a demon.

Di Merlin dico, del demonio siglio.

C. xxxiii.

Drayton, in his Polyolbion, song V. thus sings of Merlin, who was born at Caermarden:

Of Merlin and his skill what region doth not hear?
Who of a British nymph was gotten, whilst she play'd
With a seducing spirit.....

Thus Spenser,.....

And sooth men say he was not the son
Of mortal sire, or other living wight,
But wond'rously begotten and begun,
By false illusion of a guileful spright
On a fair lady.....

Fairy Queen, B. iii. C. iii.

His sepulchre is here, whose womb contains
 The deathless spirit, and decay'd remains :
 To this he by her blandishments was led,
 And what receiv'd alive, detains him dead.

It is said that Merlin intended to build a wall of brass round Maridunum ; and so says Drayton, Polyolbion, song IV.

How Merlin by his skill and magic's wond'rous might
 From Ireland hither brought the Stonendge in a night ;
 And for Caermarden's sake would fain have brought to pass
 About it to have built a wall of solid brass ;
 And set his fiends to work upon the mighty frame ;
 Some to the anvil ; some that still enforc'd the flame ;
 But whilst it was in hand, by loving of an elf
 (For all his wond'rous skill) was cozen'd by himself.
 For walking with his fay, her to the rock he brought
 In which he oft before his necromancies wrought,
 And going in thereat his magics to have shown,
 She stopt the cavern's mouth with an enchanted stone :
 Whose cunning strongly crost, amaz'd whilst he did stand,
 She captive him convey'd into the fairy land.
 Then how the lab'ring spirits to rocks by fetters bound,
 With bellows rumbling groans, and hammers thund'ring sound,
 A fearful horrid din still in the earth do keep,
 Their master to awake, suppos'd by them to sleep ;
 As at their work how still the grieved spirits repine,
 Tormented in the fire, and tired in the mine.

Spenser again,

.....A little while,
 Before that Merlin dy'd, he did intend
 A brazen wall in compass to compile
 About Caermarthen, and did it commend
 Unto his sprights to bring to perfect end ;
 During which time the lady of the lake,
 Whom long he lov'd, for him in haste did send,
 Who therefore forc'd his workmen to forsake,
 Them bound till his return, their labour not to slake.

In the mean time by that false lady's train,
 He was surpriz'd and bury'd under bier,
 Ne ever to his work return'd again, &c.

B. iii. C. iii.

His living soul must with his corse repose, 75
Till the last trump the fatal angel blows :
Then shall the just award his deeds requite,
With sin polluted, or with virtue white.

This lady of the lake appears to have been a fairy or nymph, with whom Merlin was enamoured: the story of her deceiving him is thus related in the romance called *Morte Arthur*, or the life and death of prince Arthur, printed by Caxton in 1485.

“ The lady of the lake and Merlin departed; and by the way, as they went, Merlin shewed to her many wonders, and came into Cornwaile: And alwaies laid about the lady for to have her favour; and she was ever passing weary of him, and fain would have been delivered of him; for she was afraid of him, because he was a divells sonne, and she could not put him away by no means. And so, upon a time it hapned that Merlin shewed to her a roche (rock) whereas a great wonder, and wrought by inchantment, which went under a stone, so by her craft and working she made Merlin to go under that stone, to let him wit of the marvailles there. But she wrought so there for him, that he never came out, for all the craft that he could doe.”

B. i. C. lx.

But in the life of Merlin, this adventure is related with circumstances nearer the account given by our author.

“ Merlin’s mother having secretly conceived by a demon, was, after her delivery, condemned to be put to death, for breach of chastity; but her son, an infant, defended, and set his mother at liberty. Merlin, being grown up, went to the court of Uther Pendragon, where he established the famous round table, wrought many wonderful works, and uttered a number of prophecies; here he fell in love with the lady of the lake, whom he used to call the white serpent; before his death he erected a tomb, in the forest of Nortes, capable to hold him and his mistress; and having shewed it her, he taught her a charm that would close the stone, so that it could never be opened. The lady, who secretly hated him, began one day to caress him exceedingly, and at last made him go into the tomb, in order to try whether it was large enough: Merlin, being entered, she closed the stone upon him, where he died: his spirit being likewise confined by the force of the spell, continued from time to time to speak, and to give answers to such questions as were put to him.”

His voice survives, and oft is heard to come
In tuneful music from the marble tomb. 80
To all that question, is his wisdom shown ;
He tells the past, and makes the future known :

We shall quote one more passage of Spenser, where he gives a noble description of the cave, which was the scene of Merlin's incantations. Britomart, and her nurse old Glauce, go to consult this magician :

To Maridunnn, that is now by change,
Of name Cayr Mardin call'd, they took their way ;
There the wise Merlin whilom went, they say,
To make his woune, low underneath the ground,
In a deep delve, far from the view of day,
That of no living wight he mote be found,
When so he counsell'd with his sprights encompass'd round.

And if thou ever happen that same way
To travel, go to see that dreadful place :
It is an hideous, hollow cave, they say,
Under a rock that lies a little space
From the swift Barry, tumbling down apace,
Emongst the woody hills of Dynevowre ;
But dare thou not, I charge, in any case,
To enter into that same baleful bower,
For fear the cruel fiends should thee unwares devour.

But standing high aloft, low lay thine ear,
And there such ghastly noise of iron chains,
And brazen cauldrons thou shalt rumbling hear,
Which thousand sprights with long enduring pains
Do toss, that it will stun thy feeble brains ;
And oftentimes great groans, and grievous stounds,
When too huge toil and labour them constrains :
And oftentimes loud strokes, and ringing sounds
From under that deep rock most horribly rebounds.

B. iii. C. iii.

This description is not entirely the fiction of the poet, as there are sufficient vouchers to produce for the truth of the story. " In a rock of the island of Barry, in Glamorganshire, there is a narrow chink or cleft, to which, if you put your ear, you shall perceive all such sort of noises, as you may fancy smiths at work under ground ;

I many days have in this cave remain'd,
 To which I travell'd from a distant land;
 For he, whose sage predictions never ly'd, 85
 This hour for thy arrival prophesy'd.

She said, and Amon's daughter, while she spoke,
 With silence heard, amazement in her look;
 When casting on the ground her bashful eyes,
 She to the dame with modest grace replies: 90
 Alas! what praise has my unworthy name,
 That prophets my arrival should proclaim?

Then rapt with joy at such a blest event,
 Silent she follow'd where the matron went,
 Slow leading to the tomb, in which detain'd 95
 The ghost of Merlin with his bones remain'd.

Hard was the polish'd marble, smooth and bright, }
 And like a ruddy flame dispell'd the night, }
 Tho here the sun refus'd his cheering light. }

Whether some marble, by its nature, shows 100
 A beam, that like a torch in darkness glows:
 Or else by verse, and fumigating powers,
 Or signs imprest in planetary hours,

strokes of hammers, blowing of bellows, grinding of tools, &c." See Camden's *Britannia*. Drayton, in the above lines, alludes to this story of the lady of the lake, and to this marvellous cave.

Ariosto, with the liberty of a romance-writer, places Merlin's grot in France, and removes the scene of several of his actions to that place."

See Upton and Warton's Observations on Spenser.

Not far from Caermarthen, is a hill called Merlin's hill, near the brow of which is a rock, known by the name of Merlin's chair, in which it is said, that famous prophet used to sit, when he uttered his prophecies.

(As best may seem) this wonder was compos'd :
The lustre many a pleasing sight disclos'd ; 105
Pictures and statues, that with various grace,
In order rang'd, adorn'd the sacred place.

Scarce o'er the threshold pass'd the warrior-dame,
And to the cavern's deep recesses came,
When from the breathless clay with pleasing strain, 110
T' accost the fair the spirit thus began.

May fortune all thy just endeavours aid,
O ever chaste, and ever honour'd maid !
From whose glad womb must spring the fruitful race
That Italy, and all the world shall grace ! 115
That ancient blood, which once in Ilium shin'd,
By the two noblest streams in thee conjoin'd,
The joy, the flower of every race shall yield,
Between the Danube and the Nile reveal'd,
The Tagus and the Ind, or all that lies 120
Between Calisto and th' Antartic skies.
Hence chiefs shall rise, and many a valiant knight,
Who with their counsel, and their arms in fight,
Shall on their Italy devolve their fame,
And spread in war the glory of her name. 125
Then righteous monarchs shall the sceptre hold,
Who, as the sage Augustus rul'd of old,

Ver. 116. *That ancient blood,—*] Rogero and Bradamant, both descended from Astyanax: Rogero, son to Rogero of Risa, and Bradamant, niece to Charlemain. See note on B. ii. Ver. 216.

Ver. 119.—*The Danube and the Nile—*] The Danube, a river in Germany; the Nile, a river in Egypt; the Tagus, a river in Portugal; the Ind, or Indus, a river in India, whence the country receives its name: By the Antartic skies, is meant the south pole; and by Calisto, the north, being a constellation in that part of the heavens.

Or godlike Numa, with their gentle reign
Shall bring on earth the golden age again.
Hence to fulfil what Heaven has long decreed, 130
For which 'tis doom'd thou shalt Rogero wed,
Boldly pursue the ardor of thy soul,
Nor think that aught can thy desires control;
For he who keeps thy knight in captive bands,
Shall sink opprest beneath thy conquering hands. 135

Here ceas'd the voice; the matron now prepares
To show to Bradamant her destin'd heirs.
A crew of spirits, summon'd by the dame,
Appear'd, (but well I know not whence they came)
Together now assembled in the place, 140
But differing each in habit, and in face.

Then, in the temple, by her side she plac'd
The warlike fair, but first a circle trac'd;
And, to defend her from the spirits, spread
A magic covering 'er the virgin's head; 145
She bade her silent stand, then op'd a book
In which she read, and with the demons spoke.
Lo! from the outward cave they rush'd to view,
And thickening, round the sacred circle drew;
But all attempts to enter fruitless found, 150
As if a fosse or rampart stretch'd around.

Then in the cavern, where the shining tomb
Contain'd the holy relics in its womb,
The demons enter'd, when, in order due,
They thrice had past around in fair review. 155

Should I (th' enchantress thus bespoke the dame)
Attempt to tell the deeds, and every name
Of these, who by their shadowy phantoms rise
Before their birth, to pass before your eyes,

The hours were short the story to repeat, 160
 Nor could one night the mighty task compleat;
 And hence, as time may serve, my lips shall tell
 Those chiefs alone whose virtues most excel.

Behold the first, thy likeness form'd to bear
 In comely countenance and graceful air; 165
 In Italy the leader of thy race,
 Sprung from Rogero's, and from thy embrace.
 I deem to see by his victorious hand
 Maganza's treacherous blood distain the land;
 To see his justice claim the vengeance due 170
 From those, whose guilt his noble father slew.
 By him shall Desiderius be repell'd,
 Who last in Lombardy the sceptre held.
 The emp'ror shall his valiant deeds repay
 With Calaon and Estè's lordly sway. 175

Ver. 164. *Behold the first,*—] It is to be observed, that this account of the descent of Rogero is fictitious; since Rizieri of Risa, (or as he is here called Rogero) left no son; and this Rizieri, the first Paladin, lived a considerable time before Charlemain.

Dolce.

Ver. 163.—*by his victorious hand*] The father of this Rogero was said to have been traiterously murdered by the tribe of Maganza, when his son, growing up, was made general in the service of Charlemain, and revenged the death of his father. At this time Desiderius XXII. and last king of Lombardy, rebelled against the church; when pope Adrian, calling in the assistance of Charlemain, Desiderius was constrained to shut himself up in Pavia, and was afterwards driven into Lyons in France. In this service Rogero is said to have distinguished himself, and to have been rewarded by the emperor with the government of Estè and Calaon, two castles in the jurisdiction of Padua.

Eugenico.

Behold thy grandson next, Uberto near,
 The glory of Hesperia's land in war!
 He shall his arms against the Moors extend,
 And from their rage the holy church defend.
 Survey Alberto, fam'd for warlike toils, 180
 Who decks the temples with unnumber'd spoils.
 Hugo appears with him, his valiant son,
 Who plants his conquering snakes in Milan's town.
 The next is Azo, who, his brother dead,
 Shall o'er th' Insubrians his dominions spread. 185

Ver. 176.--*Uberto near,*] Uberto was count of Estè and Comacchio; he is said to have treated his subjects as his children, and to have preserved their obedience rather by the affection which his indulgence excited in them, than by any severe exertion of his authority.

Ver 180. *Survey Alberto,--*] Berengarius I. having besieged and taken Milan, Alberto headed an army and defeated him: Hugo, son of Alberto, afterwards acquired the dominion of Milan, and planted his standard there, in which was painted a dragon or serpent. Otho, a valiant leader of that family, in the holy war of Jerusalem, under Godfrey, slew Voincius, a Saracen captain, who wore on his crest a serpent devouring a child; hence his descendants took a serpent for their arms.

Eugenico.

Tasso, in his catalogue of warriors, mentions this Otho:

...Otho fierce, whose valour won the shield
 That bears a child and serpent on its field.

B. i. ver. 417.

Ver. 184. *The next is Azo, who,--*] Azo I. who succeeded his brother Uberto in the government of Milan, till, to avoid the snares laid for him by Berengarius, he fled to Otho I. duke of Saxony, Anno, 938, taking with him his wife big with child.

See ! Albertazo, who with counsel sage
 Shall Berengarius and his son engage ;
 Well worthy to receive from Otho's hands
 His daughter Alda, pledg'd in nuptial bands.
 Another Hugo see ! O virtue known, 190
 When the sire's courage dies not with the son !
 'Tis he, who shall with justice on his side
 Abate the rancour of the Roman pride :
 To Otho and the Pope assistance give,
 (Otho the third) and from their foes relieve. 195

Ver. 186. *See! Albertazo, who—*] Of three Berengarius's, who deriving their origin from the kings of Lombardy, had the title of emperor, this, who was the third, coming into Italy with his son, at the head of a great army, seized the government, after the death of Lotharius, and reigned eleven years, stiling himself emperor, and his son king of Italy. He made war against Atone, lord of Cannossa, and besieged him three successive years, till the latter being ready to surrender himself, was, through the advice of Albertazo, succoured by Otho, king of the Germans; when Berengarius and his son were vanquished and confined, one in Austria, and the other in Constantinople, where they died miserably. Albertazo, for his virtue and good counsel, espoused Alda, Otho's daughter: others say, that he obtained her for his gallant behaviour at a tournament, which the emperor gave in Transilvania.

Ver. 190. *Another Hugo see!—*] Gregory V. who had been made pope through the interposition of Otho III. being insulted by the Romans at the instigation of Crescentius, fled to the emperor; whereupon Crescentius elected another pope, who hearing that Otho had made Hugo general of his army, retired with Crescentius into the castle of St. Angelo: they were both taken and put to death by Hugo, who, having replaced Gregory in the papal chair, that pontiff made a decree, that the emperor should in future be elected from the barons of Germany. Hugo having lived with great honour, died at Pistoia: to him Otho, as a reward of his merit, gave the government of all Tuscany; though some authors affirm to the contrary.

See Fulco, who forsakes th' Italian fields
 And to his brother each possession yields;
 While thence he goes, with better fate to gain
 A mighty dukedom on the German plain.
 He props the honours of the Saxon race 200
 Which shall at length himself and offspring grace.
 Azo the second is the next in sight,
 More fam'd for gentle peace than rugged fight.
 On either hand see where his sons appear;
 There Albertazo, and Bertoldo here. 205
 By this shall second Henry be subdu'd,
 And Parma's meadows stream with Belgian blood:
 By that the glorious countess shall be led,
 (The chaste Matilda) to his bridal bed;
 From mighty Henry sprung, who brings in dower 210
 With her one half Italia to his power.

Ver. 196. *See Fulco, who forsakes—*] Of Albertazo and Alda were born Hugo and Fulco: after the death of the emperor Otho, who, before he came to the empire, was duke of Saxony, his daughter Alda succeeded to that duchy: whereupon Fulco resigned to his brother all his patrimony in Italy, and went into Saxony to succeed to his mother's inheritance, where he made himself duke of Saxony.

Ver. 202. *Azo the second—*] Bertoldo and Albertazo, sons of Azo II. opposed the emperor Henry II. who being a cruel enemy to the church, compelled pope Gregory VII. to sell the benefices: at that time the countess Matilda, widow of Godfrey, a powerful lord, and grand-daughter of Henry I. and governess of many places, took the part of the church. Rodolpho, duke of Saxony, was made emperor in opposition to Henry, and a battle fought near Parma with great slaughter of the Belgians, when Henry was driven out of Italy. Rodolpho fell in the battle; with him was Bertoldo of Estè, a very valiant captain: Matilda married Albertazo; but a few years after, discovering that he was related to her first husband, the marriage was annulled, by the consent of the pope, and she led a holy life, leaving, at her death, her possessions to the church.

Behold Bertoldo's dearest pledge in view,
 Thy own Rinaldo next; to whom is due
 The fame of having freed the pontiff's lands
 From impious Frederic Barbarossa's hands. 215
 Behold another Azo, doom'd to reign
 O'er fair Verona and its wide domain;
 Who marquis of Ancona shall be known,
 When Otho and Honorius fill the throne.
 'Twere long to tell the names of all thy race 220
 That in the conclave shall obtain a place:
 To tell each enterprise their arms shall gain,
 What conquests for the Roman church obtain.
 Lo! other Azos, other Hugos near:
 See Fulco, and Obizo next appear. 225
 Behold two Henrys, both the sire and son:
 Two Guelphos: this has conquer'd Umbria's town;
 See now Spoleti's ducal gown he wears:
 And lo! who turns to smiles Italia's tears:

Ver. 213. *Thy own Rinaldo*—] Rinaldo, son of the fourth marquis of Estè, Anno, 1102, with many other Italian potentates, fought against the emperor Frederic Barbarossa, and Octavian the anti-pope, in defence of pope Alexander III. This Alexander is he, who, being closely pressed by Frederic, fled to Venice, where he resided for some time in the convent of Carita, in the habit of a cook, till he was discovered to the superior, and at last restored to the popedom. Rinaldo, in this enterprise, bore for his standard a white eagle in an azure field, which was afterwards worn for the arms of the house of Estè.

Ver. 227. *Two Guelphos*—] In the faction of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, arising from the disputes between the emperor Frederic II. and the pope; the lords of Estè sided with the Guelphs against the emperor, for which cause the church bestowed on them the dutchy of Spoleti. This faction took its name from Guelpho and Ghibello, the heads of each party.

Of him I speak (Azo the fifth survey) 230
 To whom shall tyrant Ezellino pay
 His forfeit life ; a wretch abhorr'd on earth,
 And to the demon said to owe his birth.
 He shall with cruelty his kingdom fill,
 And fair Ausonia ravage at his will ; 235
 That Marius', Nero's, and Antonius' deeds,
 Caius' and Sylla's crimes his guilt exceeds.

Ver. 230. *Azo the fifth*—] Ezellino de Romano, for his unexampled cruelty, called the son of the devil, by the favour of the emperor Frederic II. entering Lombardy with a vast army, made himself master of many cities, among which was Padua ; when desiring to usurp the dominion of Milan, he left it to go to the siege of Mantua. Azo V. having retaken Padua, set at liberty above two thousand prisoners, besides many women of quality. In the dungeons, above four hundred and sixty persons were found so worn with hunger, and covered with filth, as not to be known, though most of them afterwards appeared to be Paduans*. His prison was a labyrinth, in which he caused the person who made the model, to be first shut up ; at his return from the siege of Mantua, he commanded all the Paduans in Verona to be massacred ; of eleven thousand, only twenty-eight, remained alive. He then marched to Padua, but finding it not to be retaken, returned to Verona, and ordered the twenty-eight he had before spared, to be hanged in the market-place : at last being taken by Azo, who gave him three wounds, he was sent to Sonzino, where refusing nourishment, and, as some say, tearing open his wounds, he ended his detestable life.

Ver. 235. —*fair Ausonia*—] The ancient name for Italy.

Ver. 236. — *Marius, Nero, —*] Caius Caligula, and Nero, emperors of Rome, whose reigns were one continued scene of cruelty : Marius and Sylla, the first consul, and the last dictator, in the time of the republic, massacred many Romans in the civil contest between them : by Antonius, he means Marc Antony, who after the death of Julius Cæsar, in concert with Augustus, was author of the bloody proscription, which cut off so many of the commonwealth party, among whom fell that celebrated orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero.

* The cruelties of Ezellino are testified by Pietro Gerardo, of Padua, who was his contemporary.

Behold the second Frederic's forces yield,
 By second Azo conquer'd in the field,
 While he shall o'er the happy land preside, 240
 Where Phœbus, on the fatal river's side,
 Invok'd his breathless son with tuneful lyre,
 His son, who sought to guide his father's fire:
 Where the sad sisters tears of amber shed,
 And Cygnus, chang'd, his snowy plumage spread. 245
 This land he from the holy see obtains,
 A recompense for all his glorious pains !
 But where's his brother Aldobrandin lost,
 Who frees the popedom from a mighty host ;
 When the fierce Ghibellines, by Otho led, 250
 Shall round the capitol their numbers spread ;
 Whose fury has the neighbouring lands o'er-run,
 Whose force has Umbria and Piceno won ?

Ver. 240. — *the happy land preside,—*] Ferrara, situated on the banks of the Po. Frederic, persecuting the church, was excommunicated by Honorius III. and many cities were taken from him, among which was Ferrara, which was given to Azo of Estè, for his gallant behaviour against Frederic.

Ver. 242. — *his breathless son—*] Phaeton, who, undertaking to guide the chariot of the sun, set the world on fire: he was thunder-struck by Jupiter, and fell into the Po: his sisters, lamenting his death, were changed into trees dropping amber, and his grandfather Cygnus into a swan. See *Ovid. Met.* B. ii.

Ver. 248. — *his brother Aldobrandin—*] Otho IV. making war against the church, assisted by the Ghibelline faction, obliged pope Innocent IV. to retire into the capitol. Aldobrandin of Estè, the first marquis of Ferrara, with other powers, obliged Otho to return to Germany. The marquis, being in want of money to carry on the war, borrowed large sums of the Florentines, leaving his brother Azo with them in pledge; and having defeated the emperor, and killed the earl of Celano, who espoused the cause of Otho, he died in the flower of his age, not without suspicion of poison, leaving his brother Azo his heir.

He, wanting treasure to pursue the war,
 Shall go supplies in Florence to prepare ; 255
 And there, no other pledge he has to leave,
 His brother as his surety they receive.
 Then shall he spread his conquering signs again,
 And rout the German army on the plain ;
 Replace the church upon her ancient seat, 260
 And fam'd Celano's earls with vengeance meet :
 Till, while he fights the sacred pastor's cause,
 He ends his youthful bloom with just applause !
 He leaves his brother Azo to command
 O'er fair Pisauro and Ancona's land ; 265
 Each town, from Trent to where Isaurus glides,
 Between the Apennines and briny tides ;
 But (more than gold or gems) he leaves behind
 With him his virtues and heroic mind.
 Fortune all other gifts again may take, 270
 But never can the power of virtue shake.
 Rinaldo next, whose deeds his soul proclaim
 Worthy the glorious race from which he came.
 But cruel fortune views with envious eyes ;
 At Naples, by conspiracy, he dies ! 275
 Then young Obizo takes his grandsire's reign,
 And Modena and Rheggio adds to his domain.
 Such is his courage, that the people's choice
 Shall make him lord with one united voice.

Ver. 272. *Rinaldo next*,—] Rinaldo, son of Azo, and defender of the church, was confined in Naples by Frederic II. where being taken off by poison, his natural son Obizo, was by pope Innocent III. with the consent of the emperor, legitimated, and succeeded to the lordship of Ferrara: he afterwards, by force of arms, reduced Modena and Rheggio.

His offspring Azo see, the sixth that wears 280

The name, whose hand the Christian standard bears.

Adria is his; in nuptial union ty'd,

Sicilia's daughter shines his blooming bride.

Lo! in yon amiable and friendly band,

The most illustrious princes of the land, 285

Obizo, Aldobrand, for virtue nam'd:

For love and clemency, Alberto fam'd;

With Nicholas: but time denies t' explain

How with Faenza they enlarg'd their reign;

And Adria more securely made their own, 290

By whose proud name the briny seas are known;

With that fair town, which from the blushing rose,

To Grecian bards its pleasing title owes.

And, near the Po, a place whose walls contain

A crew that wish for tempests on the main. 295

I leave Argento, Lugo, many a town,

And many a castle of deserv'd renown.

Ver. 280.—*Azo see, the sixth.*—] Many Christians being besieged in the city of Ptolemais in Syria, in the time of Charles II. king of Sicily and Naples, a crusade was proclaimed for their deliverance: in this enterprise Azo was made standard bearer, and for his merits obtained to wife Beatrice, the daughter of king Charles.

Ver. 287.—*Alberto fam'd;—With Nicholas.*—] Nicholas of Estè, and Alberto his brother, purchased, for twenty thousand ducats, the city of Faenza, of John Aweutt, an English captain of the pope's: they afterwards obtained many victories against Bernabo Visconti and other potentates. Nicholas is said, never to have been too much elated with prosperity, or depressed by adversity.

Ver. 290.—*Adria.*—] A city, not far from Ferrara, which gives name to the Adriatic gulph.

Ver. 293.—*its pleasing title owes.*] He means Rovigo, called in Latin Rhodigium, from Rhodos, which in Greek signifies a rose.

Ver. 294.—*a place whose walls contain—A crew.*—] Comacchia, a town in the Ferrarese, situated between Primado and Volano, two branches of the Po, which often overflows and does great damage

See Nicholas! whom yet in early years,
 To honours of command the land prefers.
 He shall the vain designs of Tydeus quell, 300
 Who rashly dares against his power rebel.
 In rising dawn of youth, his sole delight
 In rugged arms, and labours of the fight;
 By which he soon obtains a mighty name,
 Amid the greatest chiefs the first in fame. 305
 He makes his foes their vain endeavours mourn,
 And on themselves their cruel arts shall turn.
 Otho the third in vain his power withstands,
 (Tyrant of Rheggio and of Parma's lands)
 At once resigning, in the fatal strife, 310
 To him his kingdom and his wicked life.
 He shall the limits of his sway extend,
 But ne'er, unjust, another's rights offend.
 For this th' Eternal Ruler of the heaven
 No stated bound has to his empire given: 315
 All his designs shall ever prosperous prove,
 'Till snatch'd from earth to grace the skies above.
 See Lionel; and next (a mighty name!)
 Borso behold, his happy age's fame!

to the country: these people, who were most of them fishermen, are said to be desirous of storms, because at that time great quantities of fish are thrown up in the fens.

Ver. 298. *See Nicholas! whom yet—*] Azo of Estè, who had been driven from his country, seeing Alberto dead, who left only an infant son, named Nicholas, thought of returning, with the assistance of Tydeus, count of Conio; but the child's guardians opposed him, and made Nicholas lord of Ferrara, who, being grown to man's estate, slew Otho III. who had usurped Rheggio and Parma, and obtained the government of these cities by the voluntary consent of their inhabitants.

Ver. 318. *See Lionel; --- Borso behold,—*] Lionel and Borso were natural sons of Nicholas; Hercules and Sigismund, legitimate:

He shall in calm repose preserve with care 320
 Those realms his ancestors had gain'd in war.
 He cruel Mars in gloomy caves restrains,
 And binds the hands of Rage in iron chains.
 The great designs that fill his generous breast,
 Shall all be turn'd to make his people blest. 325
 Lo ! Hercules ! of whom 'twere hard to tell
 If he in arts of peace or war excel.
 He, by his virtues, shall at length obtain
 The lordship, thirty years his right in vain !
 Pulians, Calabrians, and Lucanians find 330
 His glorious deeds, and bear them still in mind :
 Conquest for him her brightest wreath prepares,
 When, for the king of Catalan he dares

Nicholas, dying, left his legitimate children his heirs, and recommended them to the protection of Lionel, who, seizing the government, confined the two brothers at Naples, and reigned nine years. At his death, he left behind him a young son, named Nicholas, to the care of his brother Borso, who generously recalled the two brothers, and educated them as his own children. This prince was universally beloved for his many virtues ; and having magnificently entertained the emperor Frederic, was by him honoured with the title of duke of Ferrara, which title was confirmed by pope Paul II. since which time his successors retained the names of dukes of Ferrara.

Ver. 326. *Lo ! Hercules !*—] Hercules I. the second duke of Ferrara, after the death of Borso, succeeded to the dukedom which had been his right for thirty years, and beheaded Nicholas, the son of Lionel, who came with the aid of the marquis of Mantua, to get possession of the government. Being afterwards embroiled with the Venetians, he was despoiled of many lands, and besieged in Ferrara. A peace being made, Hercules fought in the service of Alphonso, king of the Catalans, and gained many victories for him : by his prudence and good conduct, he escaped the oppression of Charles VIII. king of France, who had subdued great part of Italy, and driven the before-mentioned Alphonso from his kingdom.

Th' embattled field; nor shall one deed alone
 Exalt him midst the princes of renown: 335
 For ne'er before shall ruler of the land
 Deserve such honour at his country's hand:
 Not that their city (with industrious toil)
 He moves from fens, and builds in fertile soil;
 And for his citizens extends the bound, 340
 And sinks a fosse, and raises walls around;
 Adorns with porticos the spacious streets,
 With temples, theatres, and princely seats.
 Not that, unwearied in his country's cause,
 He frees her from the winged lion's paws: 345
 Or when proud Gallia rouses all to arms,
 And Italy is kindled with alarms,
 His state alone enjoys a peace sincere,
 From abject tribute free and servile fear:
 Not even for these, and many blessings more, 350
 His native soil shall Hercules adore,
 So much, as that he leaves, to bless mankind,
 Alphonso and Hippolito behind:
 Whose friendship may be match'd with that of old
 By story'd page of Leda's offspring told; 355

Ver. 345.—*the wing'd lion's paws* :] The arms of the country put, by a figure, for the country itself.

Ver. 353. *Alphonso and Hippolito*—] Alphonso I. the third duke of Ferrara, and cardinal Hippolito, his brother, both patrons of Ariosto.

Ver. 355.—*of Leda's offspring told* ;] Castor and Pollux : Castor was the son of Tyndarus and Leda, and Pollux the son of Jupiter, begot by him, under the form of a swan, of Leda: these brothers were celebrated for their friendship; and Pollux, who inherited immortality from Jupiter, desired that he might share it with his brother, which being granted, they are feigned to live and die by turns.

Who each, by turns, could seek the nether reign
 To give his brother to the world again.
 So shall these two for ever stand prepar'd,
 Each with his own the other's life to guard;
 And more defend their land in raging war, 360
 Than steely bulwarks rais'd by Vulcan's care.
 Alphonso see ! the prince, whose soul shall shine
 With wisdom and with piety divine ;
 That men shall deem Astrea left the earth
 To visit after ages at his birth ! 365
 Nor shall he less in adverse times require
 The prudence and the valour of his sire ;
 For with a scanty force, he sees at hand
 On one side Venice with a numerous band ;
 She, on the other, who may better claim 370
 A fury's title, than a mother's name ;
 Against her offspring cruel wars to wage
 With more than Progne's or Medea's rage !

Ver. 362. *Alphonso see ! the prince,---*] Alphonso being at variance with the pope and the Venetians, the former made a league with Ferrando, king of Naples, who sent him Fabritius Colonna, with four hundred men at arms, and Pietro Navarro, with two legions of old Spanish soldiers : he likewise took the Switzers into his pay, and equipped a fleet in the Tyrrhene seas. Navarro entering, by Romania, into the Ferrarese, took Bastia by storm, a fortress belonging to the duke, cutting all to pieces. Alphonso, taking the field, routed the enemy, and recovered Bastia : being wounded with a stone, in the head, his men, who believed him slain, to revenge his death, put all the pope's people to the sword. He afterwards signalized himself at Ravenna, in defence of the king of France, where he gained that memorable victory over the forces of Spain and pope Julius II.

Ver 371.--*than a mother's name.*] The poet here seems to mean the pope, or mother church, that, till then, had always cherished the race of Estè as her sons.

Oft as he issues forth by day or night,
He puts his foes by land and sea to flight. 375
His forces shall Romania's power o'erthrow,
And stain with blushing streams the banks of Po.
The hireling Spaniard shall his anger feel,
Who for the pontiff draws th' avenging steel.
The foe at first shall Bastia's castle gain, 380
The captain, in the sudden onset, slain.
But soon the victor must his conquest mourn:
See! great Alphonso swift to vengeance turn;
When not a wretch escapes the general doom
To bear the fatal tidings back to Rome. 385
His counsel, with his lance united, gains
The laurell'd glories of Romania's plains,
Against stern Julius, and the Spanish bands;
He gives the conquest into Gallia's hands.
The country round shall pour a crimson flood, 390
Where floundering steeds shall swim in seas of blood;
The dead unbury'd lie: such heaps shall fall;
The Spaniard, Greek, Italian, Dutch, and Gaul!
He, whom his vest pontifical reveals,
Whose honour'd brows the sacred hat conceals, 395
Is he—the cardinal in future time,
The church's great support! in prose and rhyme,
The theme of every tongue; whose boundless praise,
Like Cæsar's, shall demand a Virgil's lays.
'Tis his with noblest deeds t' adorn his race: 400
So Phœbus' beams the frame of nature grace,
Put Luna, and the fainting stars to flight,
And shining conquer every other light.

Methinks I see him with a scanty train,
 Departing sad, return with joy again ; 405
 While fifteen gallies captive to the shore
 He brings, besides a thousand vessels more.
 Behold two Sigismundos next appear ;
 See the five sons of great Alphonso near ;
 Who shall their glories through the world display, 410
 To fill the distant lands and spacious sea.
 View Hercules the second, first advance,
 Who weds the daughter of the king of France.
 See next Hippolito, whose acts shall shine,
 And like his ancestors adorn his line : 415
 The third Francisco call'd: one common name,
 The latter couple from Alphonso claim.
 But should I vainly thus attempt to tell
 The names of all that in thy race excel,
 Before my tale were done, the rising light 420
 Must often chase the fleeting shades of night.
 And now (if so you deem) 'tis time to cease,
 And give the sprites dismissal hence in peace.
 Here, when she found the damsel thus dispos'd,
 Her magic book the learn'd enchantress clos'd. 425
 At once the phantoms vanish'd from the view,
 And, where the prophet's corse was laid, withdrew.

Ver. 406.—*fifteen gallies*—] The Venetians going up the Po with a fleet against Alphonso, cardinal Hippolito went out of the city with some horse and foot, and coming to Volona, a castle near the Po, planted the artillery there to such advantage, that finding the enemy's gallies unprovided, most of the crews being on shore, he sunk four of them and took fifteen ; but Angelo Travisano, the admiral, escaped with one.

Ver. 412. *View Hercules the second*,—] Hercules II. the fourth duke of Ferrara.

When Bradamant at length the silence broke,
 And thus the sage prophetic dame bespoke :
 What mournful pair was that, who plac'd between
 Alphonso and Hippolito were seen ? 431

Sighing they came, their eyes to earth declin'd,
 And gloomy sadness seem'd to fill their mind;
 Far from their brethren's way their steps they press'd,
 As if they shunn'd to mingle with the rest. 435

At this demand, the prophetess appears
 With visage chang'd, her eyes are fill'd with tears.
 Unhappy youths! what misery (she cry'd)
 For you the wiles of treacherous men provide.
 O race renown'd! O great Herculean seed; 440
 Ah! let your goodness for their errors plead :
 From you their veins the richest currents prove ;
 Let justice here give way to brother's love !
 She then proceeded in a softer tone :
 Seek not to ask, what must not now be shown : 445

Ver. 430. *What mournful pair--*] Ferrante of Estè, natural brother to Alphonso and Hippolito, either through views of ambition, or because Alphonso refused to procure him satisfaction for an injury which he had received from Hippolito, had conspired with Julio, his natural brother, to assassinate the duke; but the plot being discovered, they were condemned to perpetual imprisonment.

Porcacchi.

Ver. 439. *--the wiles of treacherous men--*] The poet, by this equivocal expression, seems desirous to cast a veil over the guilt of these brothers.

Ver. 445. *Seek not to ask,*] This passage is a close copy of Virgil, where Æneas, seeing in a vision his successors pass before him, in the same manner as is here related of Bradamant, asks the same question, and receives for answer,

..... Luctus ne quere tuorum. *Æn. vi.*

Seek not the sorrows of thy race to know.

Concerning the misfortunes of the youths here alluded to, Sir John Harington tells the following story :

Ah! gentle maid! suffice the good you know;
Nor wish for that, which found may cause your woe.

Soon as to-morrow's dawning light we view,
The readiest path together we'll pursue,
To where Rogero is in durance laid: 450
Myself will guide you through the forest-shade;
And, when we reach the margin of the flood,
Will teach you every winding of the road.

All night the virgin in the cave remain'd,
With sage discourse by Merlin entertain'd, 455
Who often warn'd th' attentive maid to prove
Propitious to her dear Rogero's love.

Soon as the skies began to glow with light,
She left the subterranean caves of night;
But first with sage Melissa, took her way 460
Through gloomy paths impervious to the day;
At length, ascending, reach'd a desert place
With savage hills, untrod by human race.
The live-long day, unresting, they pursu'd
Their course, and many a rock and torrent view'd, 465
Still, as they went, endeavouring to allay
With sweet discourse the labours of the way.

“ It happened that Hippolito and one of these brothers fell in love with a courtesan, who shewing less affection to Hippolito, was one day very earnestly importuned by him to know what moved her to prefer his brother before him; she answered, it was his beautiful eyes; upon which, Hippolito ordered them to be thrust out; but the youth found means to preserve his sight, and meeting no redress, by making his complaint to the duke, he, and the other brother here mentioned, conspired to kill him; but at the time of the execution, their hearts failed them, and the plot being discovered, they were kept in perpetual imprisonment.” Notes to *Sir John Harington's* Translation, B. iii.

But chief the prophetess instructs the maid
 How she may best th' imprison'd champion aid.
 Though you were Mars, or Pallas' self (she cry'd) 470
 And drew as many warriors on your side,
 As Afric's prince, or mighty Charlemain,
 You would oppose th' enchanter's power in vain.
 Not only does he rear (amazing sight!)
 His tower of steel on such a steepy height: 475
 Not only does he rule a winged horse,
 That strangely through the air directs his course;
 But on his arm he bears a blazing shield,
 That casts the gazer senseless on the field;
 And should you keep your eye-lids clos'd, to shun 480
 The hidden force of this terrestrial sun,
 How then the battle's progress could you know,
 When your foe flies, or when he aims a blow?
 But to withstand his arts on me rely,
 Nor can the world an aid like this supply. 485
 King Agramant a ring of great import,
 Has given to one Brunello of his court,
 Who now before us on the way is seen:
 This ring (late taken from an Indian queen)
 Is such, that he who wears it on his hand, 490
 May every fraud of magic power withstand.
 No less Brunello knows of servile guiles,
 Than he, who keeps your knight, of magic wiles.

Ver. 486. *King Agramant a ring—*] This seems to be a new attempt of Brunello to free Rogero a second time from the hands of Atlantes. It has been before related, from Boyardo, how he was taken from the enchanted garden on Mount Carena in Africa. See Note on B. ii. Ver. 395.

Ver. 489.—*an Indian queen.*] Angelica daughter of Galaphron.

This man, so skill'd and crafty in deceit,
His monarch sends to work a hardy feat, 495
That, by his cunning and enchanted ring,
He from the castle might Rogero bring,
Whom much the king esteems: but shall he owe
His freedom to a Pagan, and our foe?
Three days your course along the shore pursue; 500
(The shore will soon appear before our view)
The third your steps will to the dwelling bring,
Where you shall meet the man that wears the ring.
His stature (keep the picture in your mind)
Is not six spans, his head to earth declin'd, 505
Dark is his tawny skin, and black his hairs;
On his pale face a bushy beard he wears:
His eyes are swoln; his squinting looks aside;
His eye-brows staring, and his nostrils wide:
His dress, which gives you all the man complete, 510
Is short and strait, and for a courier meet.
With him you doubtless must awhile discourse
On the strange castle, and th' enchanter's force.
Then speak your wish to dare th' adventurous deed,
And make in fight the necromancer bleed; 515
But let him no suspicion entertain
You know the ring that makes enchantments vain.
Soon will he proffer on your way to ride,
And to the rocky mountain be your guide.
Then follow him, and mark my words aright, 520
Soon as the rock appears before your sight,
Your fix'd resolves let no compassion shake,
But seize the wretch, his forfeit life to take:
For should his lips receive the ring, he flies
Involv'd in mist from your astonish'd eyes. 525

Thus speaking; to the shore at length they drew,
Where Bourdeaux and Garonna rose to view;
And here, but first some tender tears they shed,
They parted as their different purpose led.
Duke Amon's daughter, whose impatient breast 530
Rogero fill'd, her eager journey press'd,
Till at an inn at length she ceas'd her way,
And saw Brunello there at close of day.

Full well she knew the man she sought to find,
So well his form was treasur'd in her mind: 535
She questions where he goes, and whence he came,
While lies to all he frames; nor less the dame,
Warn'd of his arts, for falsehood, falsehood deals,
Her country feigns; her name, and race conceals;
While watchful on his hands her eye she bends, 540
And every look, his treachery known, attends.
As thus distrust on either side prevails,
A dreadful noise each startled ear assails.

But cease we here, my lord! to tell the cause;
And here awhile permit the tale to pause. 545

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

BRADAMANT, following the advice of Melissa, takes the ring from Brunello, defeats Atlantes, the magician, and sets his prisoners at liberty: but soon after loses her lover Rogero, who is carried from her in a wonderful manner, by the contrivance of Atlantes. Rinaldo, who was sent on an embassy to England, being cast by a tempest on the coast of Scotland, is entertained at an abbey, where he is acquainted with the misfortune of Geneura, daughter to the king of Scotland, and undertakes to fight in her behalf.

THE
FOURTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THOUGH we too oft dissimulation find
Th' attendant vice of a degenerate mind;
Yet, since in this bad world we must oppose
A thousand perils and a thousand foes,
A blameless art, in time of need pursu'd, 5
Has oft been found the means of future good;
A sure defence from threatening danger prov'd;
Impending shame, and death itself remov'd.
If after proofs long try'd, and try'd in vain,
You scarce at last a faithful friend attain; 10
A friend to whom you truly can impart
Each little care that fills the secret heart:
How with Brunello shall the maid proceed,
Brunello, strange to every virtuous deed;
But as Melissa had display'd before, 15
Of treason fram'd, and vers'd in guileful lore?
She to deceive, no less her mind applies,
As best beseems with him, the sire of lies!

While thus their mutual converse they pursue,
Still on his hands she bends her heedful view ; 20
When sudden cries their startled ears invade,
O ! glorious mother ! (cry'd th' astonish'd maid)
O ! king of heaven ! from what dread wonder grows
This strange alarm ? but soon the cause she knows ;
She sees the host and all the household near ; 25
Who in the window or the streets appear
Gazing aloft, as when the vulgar spy
A dark eclipse, or comet in the sky.
And now a wondrous sight the virgin saw,
(A wondrous sight, surpassing nature's law) 30
A courser through the air direct his flight,
Who bore upon his back an armed knight.
Large were his wings, with different colours grac'd,
And in the midst the magic knight was plac'd :
His shining arms of polish'd steel appear'd, 35
And tow'rds the western skies his course he steer'd ;
Till sinking, he behind the mountains flew.
Then said the host (and well the truth he knew)
Behold a strange magician fam'd afar,
Oft seen to journey through the fields of air. 40
Sometimes he seems amid the stars to rise ;
And now, more lowly, near the earth he flies ;
While every beauteous damsel in his way,
The necromancer seizes as his prey.
Thus all whose features charms transcendent share, 45
Or those, who give themselves the name of fair,
With terror struck, avoid his hated sight,
And shun the face of day with pale affright.

On a high rock (the host pursuing said)
He holds a castle by enchantment made ; 50
A fortress built of stone, whose frame excels
Whate'er of wondrous, old tradition tells.
Full many knights have sought the place in vain,
For none could boast they e'er return'd again ;
That much I dread, so dear th' adventure cost, 55
His life, or liberty, each warrior lost !

This tale with joy th' attentive virgin heard,
In hopes (nor after, vain her hopes appear'd)
Soon by the magic ring's assisting power,
To quell th' enchanter, and destroy his tower. 60
Then to the host she said : let one be found,
Whose steps may guide me to this fatal ground :
For know, I burn with rage to prove my might
On this magician in immediate fight.
Thou shalt not want an aid (Brunello cry'd) 65
Behold, myself I proffer for your guide.
The windings of the road I can display,
With many secrets to beguile the way.
With grateful thanks I take you for my guide,
(In hopes to gain the ring, the maid reply'd) 70
The host a courser brought the virgin-knight,
Apt for the road, and strongly limb'd for fight ;
On this she mounted, and her way pursu'd,
Soon as the rising morn the day renew'd.
From steep to steep, from wood to wood they pass'd, 75
Till fam'd Pyrene's hills they reach'd at last.

Ver. 76.—*Pyrene's hills*.—] Boyardo's enchanted garden was on Mount Carena in Africa ; Ariosto's castle, on the hills that divide Spain from the furthest part of France, formerly called Aquitania. The plain at the foot of these hills, was called Ronscevaux,

There may the sight, in skies serene, explore
Gallia and Spain, with either distant shore :
Thence from the summit shew'd a rough descent,
That winding to the lower valley went ; 80
Where, in the midst, a rocky mountain stood,
On which aloft the fort of steel they view'd,
That rear'd to heaven, with such stupendous height,
Made all beneath seem little in its sight,
Behold th' enchanter's tower (Brunello said) 85
In which the knights and dames are prisoners made.

Hewn in four equal sides, the mountain rose
Above the plain ; nor path nor step it shows
T' assist the feet, but seem'd a place design'd
For some strange animal of winged kind. 90
The virgin now perceiv'd the hour was come
To seize the ring, and seal Brunello's doom :
But her great soul th' inglorious thought disdain'd,
To see, with blood like his, her weapon stain'd :
Since she might safely of his ring deprive, 95
And yet preserve the helpless wretch alive.
Then, while Brunello unsuspecting pass'd,
She seiz'd him unawares, and bound him fast
To a strong trunk beneath the beech's shade :
But from his finger first the ring convey'd. 100
In vain his every art Brunello tries,
And begs his freedom with unmanly cries :
She leaves him ; and, with steps secure and slow,
Forsakes the hill, and seeks the plain below :

(Ronscevalles) where romances tell us, the Christians met with that memorable defeat from the Saracens, in which fell almost all the principal knights and paladins of France.

Then winds her horn, that echoes to the skies, 105 }
 And having breath'd a blast, with shouting cries }
 She boldly to the field her foe defies.

Nor long she stays, the fierce enchanter hears,
 And, issuing from the castle-gate, appears :
 But Bradamant beheld with secret joy, 110
 Her foe no weapons in the field employ.
 Nor lance, nor heavy mace, nor sword he wore,
 To bruise the armour, and the corslet bore.

On his left arm was brac'd a mystic shield,
 Whose wondrous orb a crimson veil conceal'd. 115
 His right hand held a book, and while he read,
 Illusive phantoms round his foes he spread.
 With spear, or sword, he seem'd to urge the fight :
 And oft had dazzled many a warrior's sight.
 But no illusion was his flying steed ; 120
 A griffin and a mare the mingled breed
 Compos'd ; and like his sire his feet before,
 His head, his feathers, and his wings he wore ;
 (In all the rest his mother-mare was shown)
 And by the name of griffin-horse was known. 125
 Such, though but rarely, in those hills appear,
 Beyond where ocean feels the freezing year.

Ver. 111.—*no weapons in the field.*—] Pinabello, in the second book, had described the magician as making use of weapons in the battle with Gradasso and Rogero ; but it must be remembered, that his sight was deluded by magic, as Ariosto in this passage, says :

His right hand held a book, and while he read,
 Illusive phantoms round his foes he spread.
 With spear, or sword, he seem'd to urge the fight, &c.

Ver. 116.

But the poet now, speaking in his own person, represents the matter as it really appeared to Bradamant.

Thence had the enchanter drawn him by his skill,
 And made him soon obedient to his will;
 Taught him the saddle and the reins to wear, 130
 And o'er the earth and seas his master bear.
 But all the rest that in the fight he show'd,
 From airy visions of enchantment flow'd:
 Yet nought against the maid avail'd his art,
 Such wisdom could the sacred ring impart. 135
 And now she seems enrag'd to strike the wind;
 Now darts before; then swiftly turns behind.
 At last (for so Melissa had requir'd,
 To win the palm which most the maid desir'd)
 In fury from her steed she seems to light, 140
 And eager on her feet pursue the fight.
 This seen, the necromancer bends his care,
 With one enchantment to conclude the war;
 And, thinking now the damsel to confound,
 Removes the covering from his buckler's round. 145
 Such was his wont--awhile the shining ray
 He kept conceal'd to hold the knights in play:
 For, with a sportive mind, he took delight
 To see them wield the sword and spear in fight.
 So when the wily cat a prisoner draws 150
 Some hapless mouse within her cruel claws;

Ver. 150--*the wily cat*--] Many passages in Ariosto are of the ludicrous kind, of which this simile is an example, which is taken from the most common and familiar image in life: there is an instance of this kind still more ludicrous, where he describes the universal terror spread by Astolpho's horn in the enchanted palace of Atlantes. B. xxii. ver. 161.

In casa non resta gatta ne topo.

Nor cat nor mouse within the dwelling stay'd.

Such passages, blended with others truly epic, prove Ariosto's style and imagery to be of the mixed kind.

Wanton awhile she joys his fears to see,
Nor yet will kill, nor set the captive free.
To that we might, in every former war,
The foul magician and the knights compare: 155
But not in this, the ring with powerful aid
Here gave th' advantage to the warrior-maid,
Who watchful as she fought t' escape surprise,
Attentive on the sorc'rer fix'd her eyes:
Soon as she saw the buckler's blaze reveal'd, 160
She clos'd her eyes, and tumbled on the field:
Nor think the splendor of the beaming light,
As with the rest, had power to hurt her sight;
But the wise virgin took this artful course,
To lure the vain enchanter from his horse. 165
Her wile succeeding, swiftly wheeling round,
The flying horseman lighted on the ground:
On foot he leapt, and left behind his shield,
Ty'd to his saddle, in the veil conceal'd,
Then hasten'd where th' expecting damsel lay; 170
So waits a wolf to make the kid his prey;
While, on the ground neglected, he forsook
(With which he wag'd the war) his magic book.
Now with a chain to bind his foe he thought,
A chain prepar'd, for such a purpose brought; 175
But here an unexpected difference found;
The noble damsel hurl'd him to the ground;
He far unfit a strife like this to wage;
She strong in youth, and he deprest with age.
Now Bradamant her conquering weapon spread, 180
And from his shoulders thought to part his head;
But, marking well his face, her hand restrain'd,
As if such mean revenge her soul disdain'd.

She view'd the visage of her prostrate foe,
With wrinkles furrow'd o'er, and worn with woe; 185
Who, by his silver locks and reverend mien,
At least the course of seventy years had seen.

For Heaven's sake, youth! conclude the fatal strife,
(The lost magician said) and take my life.
But she no less to save his life conspir'd, 190
Than he to leave the hated light desir'd.
Meantime a new desire possess'd the dame,
To learn th' enchanter's country, and his name;
And what he by that rocky tower design'd,
Built in a wild, to ravage all mankind. 195

Alas! for no ill purpose (thus replies
The old enchanter, mingling tears and sighs)
On yon steep rock I built my settled home,
Nor avarice makes me round the country roam;
But fond affection would my soul incite, 200
To save from peril great a gentle knight,
Long threaten'd by his stars in Gallia's land
To die a Christian by a treacherous hand.
A youth like this, for looks and courage bold,
Ne'er did the sun 'twixt either pole behold; 205
Rogero call'd: his infancy with care
I nurs'd: Atlantes is the name I bear.
Desire of fame, but more his cruel chance.
With Agramant allur'd his step to France:
While I, who love him with a parent's love, 210
Seek him from France and danger to remove:
For this alone I rais'd the stately tower,
To keep Rogero's life from fortune's power;
Where late I kept him prisoner safe, and where
I vainly hop'd, alas! yourself to bear! 215

With gallant dames and knights I fill'd the place,
With many others of the noblest race ;
That, though deny'd to leave this safe retreat,
Society might make his bondage sweet.
Except their freedom, I with care provide 220
For every want, for every wish beside.
Whate'er the world affords each various coast
To give delight, these castle walls can boast :
The song, the dance, the costly garb, the feast ;
Whate'er the heart can think, or tongue request ! 225
Well had I sworn, and well the fruits enjoy'd ;
But thou art come, and all my works destroy'd.
Alas ! if like your gentle looks, you bear
A gentle heart, in pity hear my prayer.
That buckler take, which I with joy resign, 230
And take that flying steed which once was mine.
Or, hast thou friends in yonder tower confin'd ?
Free one, or two ; remain the rest behind.
Nay, all my prisoners, if thou seek'st, receive,
So thou alone wilt my Rogero leave. 235
But if, alas ! ev'n him thou would'st remove ;
Before thou lead'st to France the youth I love,
Ah ! let me by thy pitying sword be slain,
And free this spirit from her house of pain.
To this the maid--Thy fruitless plaints give o'er, 240
For know, I will the captive knight restore ;
Nor offer shield, nor courser to resign,
No longer yours, by right of conquest mine :
Or were they yours to give, could gifts like these
For such a warrior's loss my mind appease ? 245
For this Rogero is confin'd with care,
T' avoid the threatening influence of his star !

O blind to fate ! or, grant you can foresee,
What human power shall alter Heaven's decree ?
But if your own near fate you never knew, 250
Far less another's fate your art can view.
Request not death from me ; such prayers are vain :
Or if sincere you seek to end your pain ;
Though all the world denies, the noble mind
Can from itself its own dismissal find. 255
But first set wide the castle gate with speed,
And let your prisoners all from bonds be freed.

So spoke the virgin ; and without delay,
With old Atlantes took her eager way.
Chains of his own the necromancer bind ; 260
The cautious damsel follows close behind ;
For, still in doubt, some secret guile she fear'd,
Though deep submission in his face appear'd.
Now near they came, where on the rocky side,
Scarce to be seen, a narrow clift she spy'd, 265
By which the steps, in windings from the mead,
To the high summit of the mountain lead.

Atlantes from the threshold mov'd a stone,
Where mystic signs and characters were shown :
Beneath were vessels, whence was seen expire 270
Sulphureous smoke that came from hidden fire.
All these the sorc'rer broke ; and sudden grew
The country desart, comfortless to view !
As oft from nets the thrushes take their flight,
So swift the necromancer flew from sight ; 275
At once with him, dissolv'd to empty air,
The vanquish'd castle left the mountain bare.
Surpris'd, themselves the knights and ladies found
From stately rooms remov'd to open ground :

While many view'd their present state with pain, 280
And wish'd for pleasing slavery again.

Gradasso, Sacripant were there to see :

The knight Prasildo too, from prison free,
Who with Rinaldo came from eastern lands ;
Iroldo join'd with him in friendly bands. 285

Here noble Bradamant with joy perceiv'd
Her lov'd Rogero, him for whom she griev'd ;
Who, when he saw the beauteous maid, express'd

The grateful transports of an amorous breast ;
As one he valu'd, to his soul more dear 290

Than golden beams of light, or vital air,
Ere since the day, the fair her helm unbound,
And in her lovely head receiv'd a wound.

Each other night and day they sought in vain,
Nor till this blissful hour could meet again. 295

Now when with longing eyes Rogero view'd
Where she, his lov'd, his fair deliverer stood,
So vast a pleasure fill'd his ravish'd mind,
He deem'd himself the happiest of mankind.

From shameful bondage freed, the warriors came, 300
Where in the valley stood the conquering dame :

And where the wondrous courser they beheld,
Who wore the buckler in the veil conceal'd.

Ver. 283.---*Prasildo*.....285. *Iroldo*,---] Christian knights in Boyardo's poem, who had been imprisoned with Rinaldo, Dudon, and others, in a castle in the east, and being afterwards delivered, set out with Rinaldo for France, to the assistance of Charlemain, and are here supposed to have been taken prisoners by Atlantes.

Ver. 292. *Ere since the day*,---] See General View of Boyardo's Story.

The damsel now to seize his reins essay'd,
 And, till she nearer drew, the courser stay'd ; 305
 But soon he spreads his wings, and spurns the plain ;
 Then, at a little distance, lights again.
 Eager she follows, where she sees the steed
 Now here, now there descending on the mead.
 Thus, on the sandy shore, in mazy rounds, 310
 The wily crow the spaniel's search confounds.
 Gradasso, Sacripant, Rogero try'd ;
 Alike each knight his several art apply'd ;
 Some on the hills, some planted on the plain,
 As best they thought the winged steed to gain ; 315
 But he (when first he had the warriors led
 Up the rough paths to every mountain head,
 And in the marshy vales beneath convey'd)
 At length beside Rogero gently stay'd.
 This was Atlantes' work, whose aged breast 320
 A thousand anxious boding fears oppress'd,
 Who oft had rack'd his thoughts with pious care,
 To save Rogero from his fatal star.
 For this he bids the griffin-horse alight,
 To bear from Europe's climes the youthful knight. 325
 Rogero thought to lead him on the way,
 But the steed, stopping short, refus'd t' obey.
 From good Frontino then he leaps with speed,
 (Frontino was the champion's generous steed)
 He dares the strong-plum'd courser to bestride, 330
 And claps his goring rowels in his side ;

Ver. 328.—*Frontino*—] The horse which Brunello stole from Sacripant, and gave to Rogero.

See General View of Boyardo's Story.

Who runs awhile, till rising from the plain,
He spurns the ground beneath and soars amain.
So when the master lets the falcon fly,
At once he sees his prey, and shoots along the sky. 335
The maid, alarm'd, beheld with shuddering sight,
Her dear Rogero in this dangerous plight:
Such various passions in her bosom wrought,
She seem'd awhile depriv'd of sense and thought.
What she of youthful Ganymede had heard, 340
To heaven, by Jove's almighty will preferr'd,
She doubts may prove of her Rogero true,
Whose equal graces charm'd the gazer's view.
His course she follows through the distant skies,
While yet his course she reaches with her eyes; 345
Even when the distance leaves her sight behind,
She follows still, and views him in her mind.
Her tender bosom heaves with labouring sighs,
While ceaseless sorrows trickle from her eyes.
But when her lover long in vain she mourn'd, 350
Her looks upon his gallant steed she turn'd,
Then, parting, took Frontino by the rein,
In hopes to give him to his lord again.

Meantime the monster flew, nor knew the knight
To rule the reins, or stop his rapid flight. 355
He sees the face of earth decreas'd in show,
And every lofty summit left below;
So far remov'd, no more his eye descries
Where the vales sink, or where the mountains rise.
But when the steed has gain'd so vast a height, 360
He seem'd a little spot to mortal sight,
He steer'd his course, to where in western streams
The sun descends, when Cancer feels his beams.

He cuts his airy way; as vessels sail
 On prosperous seas before the driving gale. 365
 But let him go, and well his voyage speed,
 While to Rinaldo must the tale proceed.

Rinaldo that, and all th' ensuing day,
 Was driven by tempests o'er the watery way:
 From morn till eve the wind unceasing blew: 370
 Now to the west, and now the north they drew;
 At last upon the shore of Scotland light,
 Where Caledonia's forest rose to sight,

Ver. 366. *But let him go,—*] He returns to Rogero, B. vi. ver. 3. and to Bradamant, B. vii. ver. 212.

Ver. 373.—*Caledonia's forest—*] The forest of Caledonia, famous for its dreary solitudes, was the scene of the exploits of many of the knights errant, of which such fabulous accounts are given in the books of chivalry of those times: of these knights, the principal were the five following mentioned by our author.

Tristram, son of Meliadis, king of Leonis, and one of the first of the errant knights sworn at the round table. Marco, king of Cornwall, having engaged to marry Isotta, daughter of king Languines, sent his nephew Tristram to Ireland, to fetch over the bride. Isotta's mother, having prepared an enchanted potion to make her daughter beloved by her husband, had entrusted it to a confidante, when it happened, that Tristram and Isotta, in the voyage, tasted of the potion, and became violently enamoured of each other. King Marco, having some time afterwards surprised the lovers together, snatched up Tristram's lance, which stood without the chamber, and slew him therewith: upon which Isotta fell on the body and expired. Tristram's companion was,

Launcelot, a knight also sworn of the round table, and son of Bando, king of Benoich: he was deeply in love with queen Guenever, wife to king Arthur, and no less beloved by her: after her death he became a hermit. Launcelot was deceived by a daughter of king Piscatore, who, seeing his passion for the queen, by a crafty wile, lay with him in her stead, and had by him a son called,

Galasso, who being created a knight by his father, was the first that sat in the chair of Merlin: he is said to have obtained the holy

That midst its ancient oaks was wont to hear
 The riven target, and the shiver'd spear : 375
 Here once were seen, beneath these shades rever'd,
 Each errant-knight in Britain's combats fear'd :

vessel in which our Saviour eat with his disciples; and was reputed a saint.

Arthur was the son of Uther Pendragon, king of England: Jeffery of Monmouth informs us, that Uther Pendragon fell in love with Igerne (or Jogerne) the wife of Gorlois, prince of Cornwall. In the absence of Gorlois, Merlin, by his magic, transformed Uther into the likeness of Jordan, a familiar friend of Gorlois, himself assuming the figure of one Bricel; by means of which artifice Uther enjoyed Igerne, and begot king Arthur, who is said to have been the greatest king that ever lived: he was so renowned a warrior, that he slew with his own hand four hundred and sixty men in battle, and added other kingdoms to his own: he wore a golden helmet, with a dragon for his crest; thus Spenser in his *Fairy Queen*:

His haughty helmet, horrid all with gold,
 Both glorious brightness and great terror bred,
 For all the crest a dragon did enfold
 With greedy paws.....

B. i. C. vii.

On his shield was engraved the effigies of the Virgin Mary: he bore a lance of uncommon size and weight, with which he slew his son Mordites, who had rebelled against him, and lay in ambush to assassinate him; hence Dante says:

Con ess' un colpo per le man d'Artù.
 With this a blow from Arthur's hand.....

This prince was the first that established the order of the round table, with so many famous knights: his end is uncertain; some say, that he received his mortal wound in fighting against his traiterous nephew Mordred; but the old Welch bards had a strange tradition, that he was not dead, but would return after a time, and reign in as great authority as ever.

Galvano, (or Gawaine) there were two of this name, one the nephew of Arthur, a man of great valour, and one of the round table: the other was under Amadis de Gaule: they were both great knights, and achieved many adventures. On the beach of the sea, near Milford-haven, is a natural rock shaped into a chapel, which

From regions far and near, well known to fame,
 From Norway, Germany, and Gallia came
 Each gallant chief, who nobly scorn'd his life, 380
 Where death or conquest crown'd the glorious strife !
 Here Tristram mighty deeds perform'd of old,
 Galasso, Launcelot, and Arthur bold,
 Galvano brave; with more that titles drew
 Both from the ancient table, and the new; 385
 Knights, who have left to speak their valiant mind,
 More than one trophy of their worth behind.

Rinaldo arms, his steed Bayardo takes,
 And landing on the shore, the sea forsakes :
 He bids the pilot Berwick speed to gain, 390
 And there till his arrival to remain.

Without a squire the fearless knight pervades
 The gloomy horror of those dreary shades ;
 Now here, now there, as most he hop'd to find
 Adventures of a new and dreadful kind. 395

tradition reports to have been the burying place of Sir Gawaine, the nephew of Arthur."

See Porcacchi, Warton's, and Upton's notes on Spenser, &c.

Ver. 385.—*the ancient table, and the new* ;] " The round table was not peculiar to the reign of king Arthur, but was common in all the ages of chivalry. Any king was said to " hold a round table," when he proclaimed a tournament attended with some peculiar solemnities."

See Reliques of Ancient Poetry, Vol. i. p. 35.

Ver. 392.—*the knight pervades*] This passage has more the air of the old romances than most parts of the poem. A prince, sent from his sovereign on an embassy to a foreign power, being landed near a forest, instead of taking the nearest way to execute his commission, wanders up and down in search of adventures: however, the reader may perhaps be tempted to overlook this inconsistency for the sake of the episode thereby introduced.

The first day brought him to an abbey fair,
Whose wealth was spent with hospitable care,
Beneath its roof reception to provide
For knights and dames that through the forest ride.
The monks and abbot with a friendly grace, 400
Welcom'd the brave Rinaldo to the place ;
Who now inquir'd (but not till grateful food
Had cheer'd his spirits and his strength renew'd)
How in the compass of that savage ground,
Adventures strange by wandering knights were found. 405

He might (they answer'd) 'midst the woods essay
A thousand perils in the lonely way ;
But, as the place, so were the deeds conceal'd,
And seldom to the wondering world reveal'd.
Far rather go (they cry'd) where, done in sight, 410
Your actions may be view'd in open light :
Where after toil and danger follows fame,
With ready trump your praises to proclaim.
But if indeed your honour you regard,
Then hear the noblest enterprise prepar'd, 415
That ever yet, in ancient times or new,
A courteous warrior could in arms pursue.
Our monarch's daughter needs a gallant knight,
In her defence to wage a single fight
Against a lord (Lurcanio is his name) 420
Who seeks to spoil her of her life and fame.
He to her father thus accus'd the maid,
(Perhaps by hatred more than reason sway'd)
That she receiv'd, confest before his sight,
A lover at her window in the night. 425
Her crime in flames she expiates by the laws,
Unless a champion rises in her cause

Within a month, (now hastening to an end)
Her life against th' accuser to defend.
The cruel laws of Scotland's realm decree, 430
That every maid of high or low degree,
Accus'd of yielding to the luring fire
Of lawless love, in torment shall expire :
Nor aught can save the wretched damsel's life,
Unless some warrior dare the generous strife. 435
The king, who for Geneura's safety fears,
(Such is the name his hapless daughter bears)
Proclaims through every city, far and near,
That he who dares in her defence appear,
Whose arm shall lay her proud accuser low, 440
(If he his birth to noble parents owe)
Shall for his bride the royal maid receive,
With such a dower as fits a prince to give.
A deed like this should more your sword demand,
'Than wandering thus amid the forest land. 445
You will the flower of beauteous dames obtain,
'Twixt distant India and th' Atlantic main ;
With power and wealth, and knighthood's envy'd praise,
To crown with blessings all your future days.
Our king shall fix on you his sovereign grace, 450
Whose arm preserv'd the honour of his race.
Yet more, the law of chivalry demands,
To save from infamous and treacherous hands
A maid, who, by the world's consent, may claim
Among the chastest minds the foremost name. 455
Rinaldo mus'd awhile, then made reply :
And must a damsel be condemn'd to die
Because she circl'd in her yielding arms,
And kindly bless'd her lover with her charms?

Accurst be those that could such laws procure ! 460

Accurst be those that still such laws endure !

Let cruel virgins rather cease to live,

Not those who life to faithful lovers give :

Nor ask I now if with consenting ear,

Geneura deign'd her suitor's vows to hear ; 465

In her defence shall all my force be try'd :

Procure me speedily a skilful guide ;

And give me but th' accuser's face to see,

I trust, in heaven, to set Geneura free.

I mean not now (what truth perchance denies) 470

T' affirm that guiltless of the deed she dies ;

But mean to show what madness fill'd his mind,

Who first devis'd this law for woman-kind,

When man to multitudes his love displays.

Nor meets alone impunity, but praise. 475

And soon I hope, in heaven, to prove the wrong,

To suffer tamely such an act so long.

The rest with good Rinaldo deem'd the same,

While all agreed their ancestors to blame :

Nor could the king escape from censure free, 480

Whose justice ne'er revers'd the harsh decree.

Soon as the rosy morn, with splendor bright,

Reveal'd the hemisphere of rising light,

Rinaldo arm'd, and mounted on his steed,

He took a trusty squire the way to lead ; 485

Then left the abbey, and his course pursu'd,

For many miles along the gloomy wood,

To seek the city destin'd for the strife,

On which depended fair Geneura's life.

To make the shorter way, they chanc'd to take 490

A path more lonely, and the road forsake.

When near at hand they hear a screaming sound,
The forest echoes to the noise around,
One spurs Bayardo, t' other spurs his steed,
To search the valley whence the cries proceed. 495
Betwixt two men a damsel there was seen,
Who distant seem'd of fair and comely mein;
But ne'er before did dame or damsel show
Looks more deprest with anguish or with woe.
On either side the ruffians ready stood 500
With naked swords to dye the ground with blood;
While she with prayers and many a flowing tear,
Did for a while the dreadful stroke defer.
Rinaldo comes, and when the fair he spies,
He hastens to her aid with threatening cries. 505

Soon as the murderers saw th' approaching knight,
At once they turn'd their backs in sudden flight;
Through the dark vale precipitate they flew;
Nor would the Paladin their steps pursue,
But, drawing near the damsel, sought to hear 510
Her deep distress, and whence her death so near;
Then, for dispatch, commands the squire to bear
Behind him, on their way, the weeping fair;
While, as they rode, he better mark'd her face,
Her beauteous features, and her pleasing grace 515
That savour'd of a court; though still appear
Upon her troubl'd looks the marks of fear.
Again Rinaldo ask'd, what cruel fate
Had so depress'd her to this wretched state?

She then, with lowly voice, began to tell 520
What in th' ensuing book we shall reveal.

THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

RINALDO hears, from Dalinda, the tale of the loves of Ariodantes and Geneura, with the treachery of Polinesso, who had contrived to blacken the reputation of Geneura, and caused her to be openly accused of incontinence; in consequence of which, by the laws of Scotland, she was condemned to death. Rinaldo takes up her cause before the king, and enters the list with her enemy.

THE
FIFTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE beasts, that haunt the wood or graze the plain,
Or tame or savage, mutual peace maintain;
But if sometimes they chance to mix in war,
The generous males with females never jar:
The she-bear from the other never flies, 5
The lioness beside the lion lies:
The she-wolf with her mate securely lives,
Nor the bull terror to the heifer gives.

What strife, or what Megæra has possess
The deep recesses of the human breast, 10
That oft the husband and the wife engage
In worldly conflict; oft with impious rage,
Against each other aim the vengeful blow,
While gushing tears the genial bed o'erflow;
Nor tears alone, but some, by fury led, 15
In crimson streams the vital current shed?

Accurst is he, and born in evil hour,
Who dares rebel against the sovereign power

Of nature's laws, to strike the weeping fair,
Or from her tresses rend a single hair : 20

But he, whose breast such small remorse can feel,
T' attempt her life with poison, or with steel,
I ne'er can deem a man ; but, 'scap'd from woe,
Some fiend infernal from the realms below.

The two assassins, such we justly name, 25
Driv'n by the brave Rinaldo from the dame ;
Whom to that lonely vale their guile betray'd
To hide their dreadful crime in dreary shade :
I left the dame preparing to relate,
The secret cause of her unhappy state, 30
To good Rinaldo, her preserver-knight ;
And thus, pursuing, I the tale recite.

The damsel now began : Prepare to hear
Such deeds as never yet have reach'd the ear,
As never stain'd the most inhuman crew : 35
Not such Mycenæ, Thebes, or Argos knew !
If yonder sun that darts his beams around,
Shines more remotely on our native ground,
'Tis doubtless that he shuns this hated place,
With horror viewing such an impious race. 40

That men on foes exert their dreadful rage,
Examples have been seen in every age ;
But that dire mind what savage fury sways,
Who friendship's warmth with fiend-like ill repays !
That, undisguis'd, you all the truth may know, 45
I will from first the cause impartial show.

Ver. 33. *The damsel now began :*] There is scarcely any part of the poem more simple and unadorned than this tale, and which admits of so little elevation in an English version.

Why these assassins did with barbarous ire
Against my blooming tender youth conspire.

Know then, my lord, I yet a girl, was sent
To court, and to Geneura's service went; 50

By her receiv'd, I flourish'd in her grace,
And in the palace held an honour'd place.

But cruel love my state with envy saw,
And soon, alas! subdu'd me to his law:
He made, of every youth and comely knight, 55
The duke of Albany my sole delight.

We hear the speech, we see the looks exprest,
But who can view the secrets of the breast?

His love, avow'd, my bosom first inspir'd
With tender thoughts, with gentle wishes fir'd: 60

So far at length my fond belief was led,

That I receiv'd him to my virgin bed.

Nor that alone; but that recess I chose
In which sometimes the princess would repose;
In which conceal'd her choicest treasure lies, 65

A close retreat, remote from vulgar eyes!

There by a gall'ry to the window join'd,

A favour'd friend might easy entrance find.

By this I often introduc'd my love,
A silken ladder throwing from above. 70

'Twas thus I did the enamour'd duke receive,

Whene'er Geneura's absence gave me leave;

Who us'd to change her bed, sometimes to fly.

The burning heat, sometimes the freezing sky.

Securely oft we met, and void of fear 75

Indulg'd our flame, for 'gainst the palace here

Some lonely ruins stood, where night or day

None ever pass'd his visits to survey.

For many a month to all the court unknown,
In frequent joys our secret hours had flown : 80
So blind was I, I ne'er discover'd yet
That little truth was his, but much deceit ;
Though the base treasons of his faithless breast
Were plainly by a thousand signs exprest.
At length, without disguise, he durst confess 85
His close design Geneura to possess :
Nor know I, if his love was then begun,
Or ere he yet my giddy thoughts had won.
Judge, in my bosom if he bore a part,
Or rather, if he rul'd not all my heart ; 90
He own'd his purpos'd suit, nor blush'd with shame
To ask my friendly aid to win the dame ;
But vow'd his ardor feign'd, in hopes alone
To form a near alliance to the throne ;
As none, among the nobles of the blood, 95
Except the king, in rank before him stood.
And promis'd, should my counsel e'er ensure
His sovereign's favour, and the bride secure ;
The service, ever present to his mind,
In ties of gratitude his soul should bind : 100
That I alone, his wife, his friends above,
Should reign the unrivall'd partner of his love.
I (that his happiness endeavour'd still,
Nor e'er in thought or deed control'd his will)
Took all occasions that I saw to raise 105
In fair Geneura's ear my lover's praise.
Heaven knows how truly I employ'd my art
To serve him with a just and faithful heart !
But vain th' attempt my much-lov'd duke to place
With many a trial in the fair one's grace. 110

Another love was kindled in her breast,
Another lover all her soul possess'd:
A comely courteous knight had rais'd a flame,
A knight, who from a foreign region came:
He, with his youthful brother, left the port 115
Of distant Italy, for Scotland's court;
Where soon in arms such vast renown he gain'd,
No son of Britain greater praise obtain'd:
The king esteem'd him, and his favour show'd,
By gifts of honour and of wealth bestow'd: 120
Castles and towns he gave to his command,
And rank'd him midst the barons of the land.
This knight the name of Ariodantes bore,
The monarch lov'd him much, his daughter more:
The warrior's valiant deeds with warmth inspir'd 125
Her gentle soul, but more the lover fir'd:
Since well she knew, for her what flame possess'd
The gentle Ariodantes' constant breast.
Her growing passion made the virgin hear
My lover's praises with averted ear: 130
The more, to gain his suit, with prayers I strove,
The more her hatred rose, and spurn'd his love.
I sooth'd his grief, and oft essay'd to make
Th' ambitious duke his vain design forsake.
I show'd him how the damsel's soul possest 135
With Ariodant, for him alone confess'd
The darts of love: when Polinesso heard
(Such was his name) what little hopes appear'd
T' obtain his wish, each thought of tender kind
Driv'n from his soul, his fierce revengeful mind, 140
Enrag'd to see another favour'd more,
To hate converted what was love before;

Between Geneura, and her favourite knight,
Resolv'd to kindle rage and jealous spite,
And so the fire of enmity increase, 145
As ne'er again might be compos'd to peace:
Nor would he trust with me his treacherous thought,
But counsel only from himself he sought.
At last, he thus his speech began to frame:
My dear Dalinda, (thus I'm known by name) 150
Thou see'st the tree, though often hewn, will shoot
Fresh branches from the new divided root;
Thus nought can wholly my desires suppress,
Though lopt so often by their ill success;
Yet think not that I prize the haughty dame, 155
But baffled!—scorn'd—my soul rejects the shame!
This is my will: whene'er by love inspir'd
We meet, the princess to her bed retir'd,
Take every garment that aside she throws,
And on yourself her ornaments dispose: 160
Like her attempt to dress your flowing hair,
Let every gesture feign Geneura's air.
Before the window take your silent stand,
And let the ladder down with ready hand.
Then will I come, in faucey prepossest 165
That you are her you seem by mien and vest:
For well I trust, while thus myself I cheat,
To cure my fond desire with this deceit.
He said; and I unconscious ne'er perceiv'd
(So far had love my thoughts of sense bereav'd) 170
That what he ask'd, my treacherous lover meant,
With secret guilt t' effect some base intent;
But like Geneura cloth'd in vestment white,
Receiv'd his visits many a secret night;

Nor saw the reason working in his mind, 175
Till all had follow'd, which his guile design'd.

His purpose thus secur'd, the wily duke
Aside th' unwary Ariodantes took;
For once they liv'd in friendship's social band
Ere fatal rivals for Geneura's hand. 180

With deep regret I find (he thus address'd
The gentle knight) when singled from the rest,
Amidst my peers I show'd you most regard,
You should so ill my partial choice reward.

Full well you know what love (long time declar'd) 185

With mine Geneura's gentle heart has shar'd;

And see me now preparing to demand

The maid in marriage from my sovereign's hand.

Why will you then disturb my rightful claim?

Why thus indulge a rash and hopeless flame? 190

I swear, had Heaven revers'd our fates, to thee

My juster choice had left the fair-one free.

It moves me more to view your fruitless pain,
(Thus Ariodantes answer'd him again)

Since, ere your thoughts aspir'd to win the dame, 195

My soul had nourish'd long the growing flame;

And ne'er could sympathy more powerful prove,

To join two amorous minds in mutual love.

Why then respect not you our friendly band,

Or pay my vows the deference you demand? 200

Were you beheld with more propitious eyes,

Long since had I resign'd the beauteous prize:

But well I hope the princely maid to wed,

Though your possessions may be wider spread:

Not less my deeds by Scotland's king approv'd, 205

And by his daughter am I more belov'd.

O'erweening confidence (the duke rejoin'd)
Has but deceiv'd thy fond distemper'd mind !
Sincere the progress of thy love impart,
And, in return, will I disclose my heart. 210

So he, who in success appears to yield,
Shall to his happier rival quit the field.
Whate'er thee speak'st, yon' Heaven I here attest,
The tale shall safe within this bosom rest ;
So shalt thou vow, thou never wilt disclose 215
Whate'er my friendship may in thee repose.

This said ; each other's secrets to conceal
They swore ; then Ariodant began to tell
His love's pursuit, and undisguis'd display'd
His tender contract with the royal maid ; 220
Who, if the king her sire her suit deny'd,
Vow'd, for his sake, to shun the name of bride.
He urg'd his hopes, by many battles won
In former fields, by trophies yet unknown,
Which still he hop'd in future fields to gain, 225
For the king's fame and welfare of his reign,
To rise so high in rank, the monarch's voice
Should yield his daughter, and confirm her choice.
Behold (he cry'd) the point my love has gain'd,
And none, I deem, has equal grace obtain'd. 230
I seek no other at Geneura's hand,
Till sanctify'd by Hymen's holy band :
'Twere vain to ask her more, whose virtuous mind
Leaves every maid in chastity behind.

When Ariodantes thus with truth declar'd 235
How far he deem'd his love might find reward,
Duke Polinesso, who with guile devis'd
To make Geneura by her knight despis'd,

Thus fraudulent pursu'd—Now hear me tell,
How far my happier chance can thine excel. 240

With thee she feigns, she scorns thy hated name,
While with vain hopes she feeds thy boasted flame;
But better proofs of love to me affords,
Than airy promises, and empty words :
Which, under secrecy, I shall reveal; 245

Though lady's favours we should still conceal.
No conscious month revolves, but sees me led
Full many a night to fair Geneura's bed ;
Beholds me clasp her yielding in my arms,
And riot, unconfin'd, in all her charms. 250

Judge, if thy favours can with mine compare :
Then yield to me, and seek some kinder fair,
Since love has crown'd my happier fortune there. }

'Tis false ! (thus Ariodant incens'd replies)
Thou has defam'd the fair with odious lyes ; 255
And hast devis'd what thou hast said, to prove
If shallow tales can fright me from my love.
But since too much Geneura's fame they stain,
It fits, what thou hast spoken, to maintain.
This instant will I brand thee, ere we part, 260
A liar and a traitor in thy heart.

'Twere weak indeed (the duke again reply'd)
A strife like this by combat to decide ;
When here I offer, what these lips have told,
Those eyes shall witness, and the truth behold. 265

At this to stagger Ariodant began,
While through his bones a chilling tremor ran :
And but some glimmering yet of hope remain'd,
His heart had scarce its vital heat retain'd.

His bosom throb'd, his shifting colour fled, 270
As thus at length with falt'ring words he said:
When you disclose this deed before my sight,
(Attend me here my sacred promise plight)
Thenceforth I vow to leave Geneura free,
So liberal found to you, so harsh to me! 275
In vain your words my constant mind would move,
Unless these eyes her fatal falsehood prove.

This said, they parted: soon was fix'd again
The night my treacherous duke to entertain:
When to complete the snare his craft had wrought, 280
My guileful lover Ariodantes sought;
And bade him take his stand th' ensuing night
Amidst those ruin'd piles, conceal'd from sight.

But Ariodantes now in thought began
To doubt that this conceal'd some murderous train; 285
That the false duke, by rival hatred sway'd,
A secret ambush for his life had laid,
Pretending there a cruel proof to give
Of what his thoughts till then could ne'er conceive.
Yet was he firm to go, but on his guard, 290
Resolv'd for all assaults to be prepar'd;
That, if the chance requir'd, he bravely might
Withstand his ambush'd enemy in fight.
His brother was a knight of prudence sound,
Of all the court in arms the most renown'd, 295
Lurcanio call'd, and less, with him, he fear'd,
Than if ten others on his side appear'd.
This gallant youth he bade his arms prepare,
And led th' adventure of the night to share.
Not that he told the secrets of his heart, 300
For these to him, nor none, would he impart.

And now approach'd so near the destin'd place,
As from the hand a stone might fly the space,
He plac'd Lurcanio there, and thus he said:
When need demands, then hasten to my aid; 305
But till my voice you hear, forbear to move;
Be silent, as you prize your brother's love.
Go, fear me not,—(his brother thus reply'd)
Then Ariodantes, parting from his side,
Went to th' appointed place, his station took, 310
And on my window fix'd his anxious look.
Now, from a different part the traitor came,
So ready to pollute Geneura's fame;
Without delay the wonted signal made
To me, who little knew what snare was laid. 315
Then in a dress Geneura us'd to wear,
Soon as I found my Polinesso there,
I from th' apartment to the gallery drew,
And stood, on ev'ry side expos'd to view.
My vest was white, and richly to behold, 320
Deck'd all around with costly fringe of gold;
A golden net descending from my head
With crimson flowers, was o'er my habit spread.
Lurcanio now, who deem'd with anxious mind
Some ill for Ariodantes' life design'd, 325
And partly by a natural passion led,
Desire of knowing how his fortune sped,
With wary tread his brother's steps pursu'd,
And silent near him undiscover'd stood.
Meanwhile I thoughtless came: the silver moon 330
Resplendent on my glittering garments shone:
Nor seem'd I much unlike the royal fair,
In outward person, or in borrow'd air;

And both the brethren, by the duke deceiv'd,
The well-concerted fraud for truth believ'd. 335
Judge at that time what cruel pangs possess'd
The wretched Ariodantes' tortur'd breast.
Now Polinesso comes, and full in sight
Receives the ladder, and ascends the height.
Then, thinking none beheld what fondly pass'd, 340
Around his neck my eager arms I cast,
And, as I ever had my duke caress'd,
With many a tender kiss his lips I press'd,
Which he with warmth return'd: th' unhappy knight,
Who stood spectator of this hated sight, 345
So deeply sunk beneath the load of grief,
His soul resolv'd from death to seek relief;
Then drew the sword, despairing, from his side,
And to his breast the fatal point apply'd.
Lurcanio (who surpris'd my lover view'd 350
Ascend the gallery where disguis'd I stood,
But knew not for the duke) advanc'd with speed,
Soon as he saw his brother's frantic deed,
And seizing hastily his furious hand,
From his rash act the hapless knight restrain'd: 355
Had he been more remote, or longer stay'd,
In vain, alas! had prov'd his pious aid.

Ah wretched, senseless brother! (thus he cry'd)
What rage has turn'd your better thoughts aside?
Thus for a woman is your death design'd? 360
All false as clouds that flit before the wind!
Far rather let her die, her sex's stain!
But for a nobler end your life retain.
Before this crime she justly claim'd your love;
But now she should alone your hatred move; 365

Since your own eyes have witness'd to her shame,
And seen how low she prostitutes her fame.
Then let those arms, against yourself employ'd,
Before the king her sire her fate decide.

When Ariodantes sees his brother nigh, 370
He seeks no longer on his sword to die;
With seeming calm he veils his secret pains,
But still his former purpose fix'd remains.
Departing thence, he with him bears the smart
That gives no ease to his distract'd heart. 375

Next morning early he the court forsook,
(Nor leave of brother or of friends he took)
None but Lurcanio and the duke could know
The cause that made him thus his home forego;
While of his absence, in the royal court, 380
And o'er the land, was various the report.

Eight days elaps'd, at length a pilgrim came
With mournful tidings to the princely * dame,
That Ariodantes in the sea was lost:
Not by the Eastern wind, or Boreas tost, 385
But that himself his own destruction found,
And leaping headlong in the waves, was drown'd.
Ere this last fatal act (the stranger said)
He thus bespoke me, there by fortune led:
" Draw near, my friend, and be Geneura told 390
" The hidden cause of what you now behold:
" Tell her 'tis this, these eyes too much have seen,
" Ah! happy, if these eyes had never been!"
By chance we then upon a mountain stood
That tow'rd's Hibernia bellies o'er the flood. 395

* Geneura.

Soon as he ceas'd to speak, I saw him leap
From the high rock, and plunge into the deep.
Him in the sea I left; and now I come
To bring the tidings of his hapless doom.

Half dead with grief the news Geneura heard; 400
A sudden paleness on her face appear'd.

O Heaven! what did she, and what words she said,
When laid in private on her faithful bed!

She strikes her bosom, and her garment tears,
She rends with cruel hands her golden hairs; 405
Repeating oft what, with his latest breath,
Sad Ariodantes nam'd his cause of death;
That the strange issue of his fate was such,
His eyes in hapless hour had seen too much!

Soon was the fame o'er all the kingdom spread, 410
Of Ariodantes thus untimely dead.

Not with dry eyes the king his loss survey'd;
While pious tears each knight and lady paid,
At these unhappy tidings, o'er the rest
Heart-piercing anguish fill'd his brother's breast; 415
By such example oft his soul inclin'd

To die, and be at least in death conjoin'd;
This many a time returning to his thought,
That false Geneura such destruction wrought.
At length revenge so far possess'd his mind, 420

So far did rage and grief his reason blind,
That he the royal grace no longer priz'd,
But the king's hatred, and the land's despis'd.
The peers assembled now, the time he took
T' address the throne, and thus indignant spoke. 425

Attend, my lord! while I the cause relate
That urg'd my brother to his hapless fate.

Your daughter's was the crime : 'twas she distress'd
With deep affliction Ariodantes' breast.

He lov'd the princess ; (why should I conceal, 430
Or blush so pure a passion to reveal ?)

And hop'd at length t' obtain her for his bride,
By numerous virtues, and by service try'd.

But while the bashful lover thus receives
The modest odour of the distant leaves, 435

He sees another to the tree ascend,
And from the boughs the blooming fruitage rend.

He said, and instant to the king display'd
The seeming crime, so late to sight betray'd,
Attesting that himself beheld the dame 440

Receive the secret partner of her shame ;
A wretch unknown, that veil'd in dark disguise
Conceal'd his person from observing eyes :
Concluding, that he stood in fight prepar'd
To prove the truth of all his tongue declar'd. 445

Judge if the father struck with grief appear'd,
When he this fatal accusation heard ;
Both with the tale surpris'd, and that he knew
Unless to her defence some warrior drew
To give Lurcanio in the field the lye, 450
He must his dearest child condemn to die.

Our laws, my lord ! have doubtless reach'd your ear,
Where every damsel is by doom severe
Condemn'd to certain death, who yields her charms
To any other but a husband's arms : 455
Unless some knight th' accuser dares to brave,
And from her threaten'd fate the damsel save.

The king has caus'd his heralds to proclaim,
(As deeming falsehood wrongs Geneura's fame)

That he who clears her honour from the stain, 460
The royal maid, with princely gifts, shall gain.

As yet no champions in her cause appear,
Each views his fellow's face with marks of fear :
In arms so dreadful is Lurcanio's might,
That all, with terror, seem to shun the fight. 465

Her cruel fortune adds this sorrow more,
Her absent brother treads a foreign shore,
The brave Zerbino, who in field displays
Such deeds as merit ever-during praise :
But could he hear in time her dangerous state, 470
How would he fly t' avert his sister's fate !

The monarch, who would all his thoughts employ
By other means, than arms, the truth to try,
Secur'd some damsels of Geneura's train
In hopes the fatal secret to explain ! 475
And hence I dreaded, if myself were caught,
The duke and I in danger might be brought.
That night, in fear, the palace I forsook,
And, privately withdrawing, sought the duke :
Declar'd how much to both it might import 480
That I without delay should quit the court.
He prais'd my prudence ; promis'd to provide
A safe asylum where I might reside ;
Appointing two, to guide me through the wood,
Where near, he said, his lonely fortress stood. 485

Reflect, sir knight, if acts like mine should prove
To Polinesso marks of faithful love ;
Then say, that maids must ever hope in vain
For tender love to be beloved again.

This cruel, perjur'd, and ungrateful man, 490
At length to doubt my constant faith began ;

And fearing lest I should at length reveal
 The treacherous act he labour'd to conceal;
 He feign'd I should awhile from court retire,
 Apart to shun the king's impending ire; 495
 And sent me thence to this remote retreat,
 Here, not my safety, but my death to meet.
 For secretly he gave my guides command,
 Soon as their steps had reach'd this forest-land,
 To take my life---lo! how my faith was paid! 500
 Too well his dire command had been obey'd,
 Had not my cries so timely reach'd your ears:
 Behold how Love his votaries prefers!

Thus to the Paladin Dalinda told
 Her mournful tale, while still their way they hold; 505
 And if before he meant t' assist the dame,
 When just suspicion seem'd to tax her fame;
 More earnest now his bosom's zeal appear'd,
 When thus the cruel calumny he heard.
 Then tow'rds St. Andrew's town with eager haste 510
 Rinaldo with the squire and damsel pass'd;
 The king and court were there; and there the strife
 Must soon decide his daughter's death or life.

Ver. 504. *Thus to the Paladin*—] See Shakes-peare's *Much Ado* About Nothing, where the circumstances of the plot, so far as relate to Claudio and Hero, are very similar to this story of Ariodantes and Geneura: but one of our last new tragedies, called the *Law of Lombardy*, is more immediately built on the incidents of Ariosto's fable. This story of Geneura was imitated by Melain de Gelais, a French poet, about 1572. Another tale was written on the same subject, entitled, *Conte de l'Infante Geneure fille du roy d'Ecosse*, 1556.

As nearer to the neighbouring towns they drew,
 They found a squire who gave them tidings new; 515
 That a strange champion there in armour came,
 Who undertook to clear Geneura's fame;
 Unknown his cuirass, and unknown his shield,
 His name and lineage from his squire conceal'd;
 For since he first appear'd, he ne'er expos'd 520
 His face to view, but wore his beaver clos'd.
 This heard, Rinaldo swift his way pursu'd,
 And soon the city and the gates he view'd.
 There seem'd Dalinda sore oppress'd with fear,
 Till brave Rinaldo's words her spirits cheer: 525
 Observing how the gates were closely barr'd,
 He ask'd the cause, and thus reply'd the guard:
 That thence the crowd were fled to view the fight
 Between Lurcanio and a stranger-knight,
 Which, distant, on a spacious plain they wag'd, 530
 And that the combatants were then engag'd.

None here Rinaldo's eager course oppos'd,
 The porter open'd, and the gate re-clos'd;
 Through the void city pass'd the gallant knight;
 But, by the way, he made the dame alight; 535
 And bade her wait the issue of the fight.

Impatient thence he hastens to the field,
 Where the two knights their wrathful weapons wield;
 Who many blows had given on either part:
 There fought Lurcanio with revengeful heart 540
 Against Geneura; while on t'other hand
 The stranger's courage well her cause maintain'd.
 With these, six warriors in the lists appear
 On foot; the cuirass on their breast they wear.

The duke of Albany there takes his place, 545
Upon a gallant steed of generous race :
To him, as to high constable, they yield
To keep the order of the listed field.
Fierce were his looks, exulting in his thought,
To see Geneura in such danger brought. 550

Through the thick press Rinaldo forc'd his way ;
No multitudes Bayardo's course could stay :
Those, who the tempest of his coming found,
Appear'd not slow to give the courser ground.
Rinaldo, eminent above the rest, 555
Appear'd the flower of chivalry confest :
Till, near the king arriv'd, his course he stay'd ;
All listening round to hear the words he said.

My noble lord, (the champion thus began)
The hands of yonder combatants restrain. 560
Whoe'er shall perish in the doubtful strife,
Must undeserv'd resign a noble life.
One thinks himself by justice only led,
But treason o'er his head a mist has spread :
That fatal error which his brother slew, 565
Himself to brave the dangerous combat drew :
The other knows not yet if wrong or right
Attend his cause, but issues to the fight,
The courteous prowess of his arms to try,
Rather than let such matchless beauty die. 570
Lo ! here I come to give the guiltless aid,
Avenging on the traitor, the betray'd :
But first, bid each awhile his rage forbear,
Then audience give to what I shall declare.

The king was mov'd with what Rinaldo said, 575
Both by his words and noble presence sway'd ;

Then, stretching out his hand, commands the peace,
And bids awhile the combatants to cease.
When to the king, and barons of the land,
The knights, and populace on either hand, 580
Rinaldo all the subtle snare display'd
By Polinesso for Geneura laid.
The tale explain'd, he offer'd with his sword
Ev'n there to prove the truth of every word.
Now Polinesso, summon'd to the place, 583
Appear'd with deep confusion in his face;
But yet with boldness, he the fact deny'd:
Soon shall we (said Rinaldo) this decide.

Thus, ready arm'd, the list prepar'd in view,
They both, without delay, to combat drew. 590

What transport to the king, and all the land,
To hear Geneura's innocence maintain'd!
Each hop'd, that God would openly proclaim
How falsehood had defac'd her spotless name.
The duke was known for every treacherous art, 595
Unjust, and cruel, fraudulent of heart,
That none could wonder such a villain's mind,
A snare so horrid and so black design'd!

Now Polinesso stands with fear confest,
With bloodless visage, and with panting breast. 600
Thrice sounds the trump, and at the warning blast,
His lance in rest the trembling traitor plac'd.
On t' other hand Rinaldo came, and try'd
At one fierce course the conflict to decide.
Nor err'd the weapon from the knight's intent, 605
But through the traitor's panting bosom went:
Pierc'd through and through, he, by the dreadful force,
Was borne to earth six feet beyond his horse.

Rinaldo now dismounts ; and, as he lies,
Swift from the helpless wretch his helm unties. 610
But he, unable more to wage the war,
For mercy then prefers his humble prayer ;
And to the king and court on every side,
Confess'd the fraud for which he justly dy'd.

While yet with weak and faltering words he spoke,
His utterance fail'd, and life his limbs forsook. 616

The king rejoic'd his much-lov'd child to see
From threatened death and ignominy free.
Not with such transport (had some hostile power
Driv'n him an exile from his native shore) 620
Had he his crown regain'd ; and hence he gave
Distinguish'd honours to Rinaldo brave.
But when, his helmet rais'd, he knew the knight,
(A face before no stranger to his sight)
With lifted hands his thanks to Heaven he paid, 625
That sent so fam'd a champion to his aid.

The knight, who first t' assist Geneura came,
(Unknown to all his country and his name)
Who, arm'd in her defence, had sought the field,
Remain'd apart ; and all that pass'd beheld. 630
But now the king desir'd his name to know,
And begg'd him from his casque his face to show ;
That as his generous purpose claim'd regard,
He might with royal gifts such worth reward.
At length, with much entreaty, from his head 635
He rais'd his helmet, and to sight display'd
What in th' ensuing book we shall reveal,
If grateful to your ear appears my tale.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE conclusion of the story of Geneura. Rogero is carried by the flying-horse to Alcina's island, where he finds a knight turned into a myrtle, who gives him an account of his transformation, and warns him to shun the wiles of the sorceress. Rogero engages in combat with a troop of monsters, who oppose his passage from the city of Alcina; and is afterwards accosted by two ladies belonging to her palace.

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

MOST wretched man, who hopes in long disguise
To veil his evil deeds from mortal eyes !
Though all were silent else, the sounding air,
The conscious earth his trespass shall declare :
Th' Almighty oft in wisdom so provides, 5
The sin to punishment the sinner guides,
Who, whilst he strives t' elude each watchful sight,
Unheeding brings his lurking guilt to light.

False Polinesso deem'd his state secure,
And all his treason from discovery sure ; 10
Dalinda thus remov'd, from whom alone
He deem'd th' important secret could be known :
With crimes increasing, to the future blind,
He hasten'd on that fate he shunn'd to find ;
At once resigning wealth, the valu'd claim 15
Of friends, of life, and honour's nobler name !

Now each, impatient, urg'd the stranger-knight
To show his face so long conceal'd from sight ;

At length he lifted up the helm he wore,
Disclosing features oft disclos'd before : 20
Then Ariodantes all with joy perceiv'd
Him, for whose loss the realm of Scotland griev'd ;
That Ariodantes, whom, by fame misled,
Geneura and his brother wept for dead ;
For whom the king, the court, the people mourn'd ; 25
So brave a knight, with every grace adorn'd !

In this the peasant's truth appear'd to fail,
Whose lips had told the fair that fatal tale :
Yet had his eyes beheld the desperate knight
Leap headlong from the rocky mountain's height. 30
But, as it oft befalls the wretch, whose grief
Calls death, when distant, to his wish'd relief ;
To quit his purpose, when he sees him near,
So dark and comfortless his paths appear,
Thus Ariodantes, plunging in the wave, 35
With late repentance sought his life to save ;
And strong of limbs above the waters bore
His head, and ply'd his arms and swam to shore.

Now every former thought of death he blam'd,
And senseless and unjust his fancy nam'd, 40
Then journey'd on with garments briny wet,
Till in a hermit's cave he shelter met ;
Resolv'd awhile in secret there to stay,
Till time should to his ears the truth convey,
If for his loss suppos'd, Geneura griev'd, 45
Or if with joy the tidings she receiv'd.
And soon he heard so far her sorrows wrought,
As near to death th' unhappy virgin brought ;
That stern Lurcanio, by resentment sway'd,
Had to the king accus'd the guiltless maid. 50

Now fierce his wrath against his brother turn'd,
Fierce as before for love his bosom burn'd.
With grief he learnt, that yet no gallant knight
Had ventur'd in Geneura's cause to fight :
Lurcanio's wisdom and his valour known, 55
All seem'd with care the doubtful strife to shun ;
And thought the youth in such a dangerous strife,
T' assert a falsehood ne'er would risk his life.

But Ariodantes by despair impell'd,
Resolv'd to meet his brother in the field. 60
Can I behold (the faithful lover said)
To cruel death my fair Geneura led ?
Whom still I must my queen and goddess prize,
Dear as the light that shines before my eyes !
Just or unjust the cause, still let me fly 65
For her lov'd sake to conquer or to die.
Yet, ah ! too sure I shall the wrong defend ;
But be it wrong ; my blood the strife shall end !
One thought alone in death will give me pain,
That, if I fall, Geneura must be slain ! 70
This comfort yet remains,—'twill then be prov'd
How well by Polinesso was she lov'd :
Then may she view her lover's faith display'd,
Who ne'er appear'd to combat in her aid ;
While me, whose truth she could so ill requite, 75
She sees, for her defence, thus slain in fight.
Lurcanio too his punishment shall feel,
For having kindled first this flame of ill.
Remorse and grief shall rend his tortur'd breast,
When all the fatal conflict stands confest : 80
When, thinking to revenge his brother's death,
He finds him by his hand depriv'd of breath !

So mus'd the knight; and, having thus decreed,
Procur'd new armour, and a horse with speed;
His scarf was black; and round his ample shield, 85
With yellow-green was fring'd the sable field.
He next receiv'd a squire from Fortune's hand
Unknown to all, a stranger in the land:
Thus well disguis'd, with him the knight pursu'd
His way, and arm'd before his brother stood. 90
What follow'd then, my tale before has shown,
And how he was for Ariodantes known.

Not less the king rejoic'd his face to see,
Than his lov'd daughter from her danger free;
And justly deem'd he ne'er again could view 95
A youth in love so valiant and so true;
Who, when such seeming wrongs inflam'd his thought,
With his own brother, in her cause, had fought.
Urg'd by his court, and at Rinaldo's prayer
He gave to Ariodant Geneura fair: 100
Albania's dukedom, which the king again
Receiv'd, the traitor Polinesso slain,
Which could not chance in more propitious hour,
He gave his daughter for her marriage dower.

Rinaldo then Dalinda's cause embrac'd, 105
And pardon gain'd for all her errors past,
Who, weary'd with the world's unhappy state,
Had vow'd to Heaven her mind to dedicate.
Forsaking Scotland, she to Dacia went,
And there her days in hallow'd cloisters spent. 110

Ver. 86. *With yellow-green—*] The colour of fading leaves: In chivalry, this colour was worn as a mark of desperation. So Bradamant wears a scarf of the same colour. Book xxxii. ver. 325.

But now 'tis time to view Rogero's course,
Who cuts the skies upon the winged horse.

Though brave Rogero was to fear unbred,
Nor yet the colour from his cheeks had fled ;
Full well I dare affirm, his heart must quake, 115
Like trembling leaves that to the breezes shake.
He now has left Europa's climes afar,
And past a mighty space that region, where
Unconquer'd Hercules, in ages past,
His boundary to mariners had plac'd, 120
The Griffin-horse, a beast most strange to sight,
With such a strength of pinion urg'd his flight ;
No winged animal of swiftest breed,
Could dare to mate with him in rapid speed :
Nor can we, join'd with him, the bird compare 125
Whose mighty talons Jove's artillery bear.
Not swifter scarce the glancing lightning flies ;
Or vengeful bolt that rends the sullen skies.
At length he seems preparing, tir'd with flight,
In airy rings upon an isle to light : 130

Ver. 111. *But now 'tis time--*] He returns again to Rinaldo, in the viiith book.

Ver. 120. *His boundary to mariners--*] The straits of Gibraltar, where Heracles was said to have planted his pillars, as the utmost bounds of navigation, the great ocean lying beyond : Thus Tasso....

Tempo verrà, che sian d'Ercole i segni.
Favola vile ai naviganti industri.

The time will come, when sailors yet unborn,
Shall name Alcides' narrow bounds in scorn.

Jer. Del. B. xv. ver. 220.

An isle like that, where, from her lover fled,
Long time conceal'd within her secret bed,
The virgin Arethusa runs in vain
By a strange course beneath the roaring main.
Midst all his way through ample fields of air, 135
Rogero had not seen a place so fair ;

Nor had he search'd the vary'd world around,
A more transporting clime could e'er have found.
To this the monster with his rider bends,
And, after many a spacious wheel, descends. 140

There cultur'd plains, and grassy hills appear,
Green meadows, shady banks, and waters clear ;
Delightful groves where palms and laurels grew,
Cedars, and myrtles, pleasing to the view :
With flowers and fruits the orange stands between ;
All intermix'd, a various sylvan scene ! 146
These, with their shade, afford a safe retreat
From all the burning of meridian heat.

Amid the boughs secure, with fluttering wing,
The nightingales with tuneful voices sing ; 150
While midst the roses red, and lilies fair,
For ever nurs'd by kindly Zephyr's care,
The nimble hares, in wanton mazes, play'd ;
And stately stags with branching antlers stray'd :
Without the fear of hostile hands they stood 155
To crop, or ruminate their grassy food.
The wild goats frolic ; leap the nimble deer ;
That in this rural place in troops appear.

Soon as the earth so nigh Rogero found,
To reach with safety, on th' enamell'd ground 160
With gladsome heart he leaps, but still detains
His flying courser by the straitened reins ;

Till, 'twixt a laurel and a pine-tree plac'd,
He to a verdant myrtle ties him fast.
Near this a cool and crystal fountain flows, 165
Which fruitful palms and cedars round enclose.
His helm and buckler here aside he threw ;
And from his hands his warlike gauntlets drew.
Now to the hills he turn'd, and now the seas,
Receiving in his face the kindly breeze, 170
Which gently in the oaks and beeches play'd,
Whose waving tops a pleasing murmur made.
Now in the limpid stream he bathes his lips ;
And now his hands within the water dips,
To cool his throbbing pulse, and veins that glow'd 175
Opprest beneath his massy armour's load.
Nor was it strange he should so fiercely burn,
Who had no little time his cuirass worn ;
But, thus completely arm'd, had made his way
Three thousand miles without a moment's stay. 180
Meantime his courser, that beside him stood
In the close shadow of the tufted wood,
Drew sudden back, impell'd with starting fear,
As from some object in the covert near ;
But while in vain to loose his bands he try'd, 185
He shook the myrtle where his reins were ty'd ;
Shook with such force, as made the leaves around
Fall from the boughs, and strow in heaps the ground.
As, when by chance a hollow cane is plac'd
Amid the flames by slow degrees to waste, 190
Soon as the heat has rarify'd the wind
That in its narrow womb remains confin'd,
Hissing it raves to be so closely pent,
Till freed at length the fury finds a vent :

So writh'd with pain th' offended tree appear'd, 195
Till, groaning, from its bark these words were heard.

If pity in your breast can entrance find,
As sure your looks proclaim a courteous mind;
From my torn trunk unbind this monster's rein:
Enough my own afflictions give me pain! 200
Nor need, alas! external rage be shown
T' increase the woes I have already known.

Rogero started at the vocal sound,
But when his ears the wondrous speaker found,
Amaz'd he hasten'd and his steed unty'd, 205
His glowing face with flushing colour dy'd.
Forgive my crime, whate'er thou art (he said)
Or parted ghost, or goddess of the shade!

Ver. 196.—*these words were heard.*] Spenser has a story of this kind, where Fadrubio is described as turned into a tree; on which passage Mr. Upton has the following remark:

"I believe that the reader need not be put in mind, that this wonderful tale (so well adapted to the genius of romance) is taken from Virgil, where Æneas plucking a bough of myrtle, sees from the rife drops of blood trickling down, from whence a piteous voice was heard:

Spare to pollute thy pious hands with blood—
O! fly from this inhospitable shore,
Warn'd by my fate, for I am Polydore.

Dryden Æn. B. III. ver. 60.

"'Tis no wonder that Ariosto, (who is an allegorical and a moral writer, as well as a romance writer) should copy this tale from Virgil. Rogero, having tied his winged horse to a myrtle-tree, the ghost, which was therein lodged by enchantment, speaks to him and tells him, he was formerly a knight; but by the witchcraft of Alcina, he was transform'd into a tree; and that others were changed into various beasts and other forms; the true image of the man being lost through sensuality."

Upton's Notes to Fairy Queen, B. i. C. ii.

Unknowing, that beneath thy rugged rind
Conceal'd, an inmate spirit lay confin'd, 210
I suffer'd thus thy leaves to strow the place,
And to thy greens permitted this disgrace.
But, gracious still, refuse not to declare
Thy name that dost so strange a body wear,
In which inclos'd a human spirit lies; 215
So Heaven defend thee from inclement skies!
If all the power I from above receive
Can ease thy suffering, or thy woes relieve;
Behold, I promise by that virgin fair
Whose image in my better part I bear, 220
I will with word and deed thy cause maintain,
As may deserve thy grateful thanks again.

Rogero ceas'd; and, as the warrior spoke,
From head to foot the trembling myrtle shook:
Then from the bark exhal'd a dewy sweat; 225
Like greenwood crackling in the fiery heat.

Thy courtesy (the myrtle thus began)
Persuades me to reveal my secret pain;
Both who I was, and what enchanted power
Transform'd my shape upon this fatal shore. 230
A Paladin of France was I, by name
Astolpho call'd, and not unknown to fame.

Ver. 232. *Astolpho call'd,—*] Astolpho makes a considerable figure in the *Orlando Innamorato*, where, in the course of his adventures, he is imprisoned by Monodanc, a Pagan king, in the east, together with Rinaldo, Gryphon, Aquilant, and Dudon: but these knights being afterwards delivered by Orlando, set out to go to the assistance of Charlemain. Astolpho, Rinaldo, and Dudon, travelling in company, arrive at the castle of Alcina, where Astolpho is decoyed from the rest, in the manner here related by Ariosto.

Orlando and Rinaldo (who shall grace
 With mighty deeds the earth) partake my race;
 And, at my father Otho's death, the land 235
 Of England would have fall'n to my command.
 So fair was I, that many a damsel sought
 My love, till I my own destruction wrought.
 Returning from those isles, around whose shores,
 Remote from hence, the Indian ocean roars; 240
 Where good Rinaldo and myself detain'd,
 With others long in prisons dark remain'd,
 Till we again review'd the joyful light,
 Freed by the valiant arm of Brava's knight:
 Against the west, along those sands we came 245
 That feel the southern heat of Phœbus' flame;
 There, as our way and cruel fortune drew,
 One morn we chanc'd a stately tower to view,
 And issu'd thence Alcina we espy'd
 Alone, and standing by the ocean side; 250
 Where without hook or net (most strange to thought)
 Whatever fish she pleas'd, to land she brought.
 At her command, the dolphins left the stream;
 With open mouths the mighty tunnies came;

Ver. 235.--*Otho*--] Ariosto has this tradition of a king of England by the name of Otho, from the romance writers.

See the genealogy of the house of Clarmont, Book xxiii. ver. 156.

Ver. 244.--*Brava's knight*.:] Orlando, called the knight of Brava.

Ver. 251.--*without hook or net*--] This passage is entirely taken from Boyardo: Alcina fishing, her deceiving Astolpho with the whale which appeared an island, &c. may be seen in the *Orlando Innam.* B. ii. C. xiii.

The various fishes taken by Alcina, are said to denote the different ranks and conditions of men, that are captivated by vice, and the whale which carries away Astolpho, to shew that we often forsake solid happiness for fallacious appearances.

The sea-calves, rising troubled from their sleep, 255
 Forsook their beds, and hasten'd from the deep:
 Of various forms and size, a thousand more,
 In numerous shoals came swimming to the shore.
 The monsters of the seas, tremendous whales
 Above the water show'd their ample scales. 260
 Among the rest a mighty whale we view'd,
 The greatest sure that ever swam the flood,
 And, as he lay unmov'd, by looks deceiv'd,
 We all the monster for an isle believ'd;
 So huge he seem'd, so vast a distance spread 265
 From his broad tail extending to his head!
 Alcina drew the fishes to the shore,
 With nought but simple words and magic power.
 Her, with Morgana, both for ill design'd,
 One womb produc'd to punish human kind. 270

Ver. 269.—*Morgana*,—] Morgana, a fairy, is a considerable personage in Boyardo, though but lightly touched upon in Ariosto; the former poet calls her the Fairy of Riches; she imprisons many knights in her enchanted palace, and among the rest Rinaldo, Dudon, Prasildo, and Iroldo, who are released by the valour of Orlando: she tempts Orlando with the prospect of riches, which he despises. Spenser seems to have taken his idea of Mammon's tempting Guion, from this fiction of Boyardo. Orlando being urged to prosecute an adventure that was to procure him great treasure, replies:

.....di pericoli solo e di fatica,
 Il cavalier si pasce e si nutrica:
 Speranza d'acquistar oro ed argento,
 La spada non m'aria fatto cavare.

The hardy knight to deeds of glory bred,
 Is nurs'd by labour and with danger fed,
 Then deem not that I draw the sword in vain,
 The silver bright, or gleaming gold to gain.

Berni, *Orlando Innam.* B. i. C. xxv.

Now on my face she cast her eager sight,
 And seem'd to view my features with delight,
 Then soon resolv'd me from my friends to part;
 And ah! too well she prov'd her wily art!
 For, near advancing, with a smiling look, 275
 With courteous, soft deportment, thus she spoke.
 Sir knight! if you consent awhile to stay,
 And kindly here vouchsafe to pass the day,
 I'll show you, in the progress of my sport,
 Of countless fishes every different sort; 280
 Some soft, some hairy, some with scales all bright,
 In number more than are the stars of night.
 Or if you would a Syren view, whose voice
 With tuneful music makes the waves rejoice,
 Hence let us pass and reach yon neighbouring shore 285
 To which she comes at this accustom'd hour.

Guion, in Spenser, makes much the same answer to Mammon:

Regard of worldly muck doth foully blend,
 And low abase the high heroic spright,
 That joys for crowns and kingdoms to contend:
 Fair shields, gay steeds, bright arms be my delight,
 These be the riches fit for an adventurous knight.

B. ii. C. vii.

Thus Rogero, in Ariosto, in the present book:

..... la cagion ch'io vesto piastra e maglia,
 Non è per guadagnar terra ne argento.
 these shining arms my limbs enfold,
 Not lands to conquer or to purchase gold.

Spenser, in his description of the riches of Mammon, visited by Guion, had undoubtedly an eye upon a similar passage in Boyardo, where that poet describes at large the subterraneous palace of the witch Morgana.

See Orlando Innam. B. ii. C. viii.

See likewise Note to Book xix. ver. 272.

As thus she said, the monstrous whale she show'd,
 Which seem'd a little island in the flood.
 While I, too rashly (which I now lament)
 Believ'd her words, and on the monster went ; 290
 Rinaldo, Dudon, beckon'd, but in vain ;
 Not all their cares my rash attempt restrain.
 Alcina, with a smile, my steps pursu'd,
 And left the two as on the strand they stood.
 The whale, instructed well in her design, 295
 Began to move, and cleave the foamy brine :
 Then all too late my folly I deplore,
 Soon as I see retreat the lessening shore.
 Rinaldo leap'd, t' assist me, in the main,
 But scarce escap'd with life to land again ; 300
 For then a furious wind was seen to rise,
 That swell'd the seas, and troubled all the skies ;
 His following fortune ne'er attain'd my ear :
 Meantime to dissipate my growing fear
 Alcina gently strove, as all the day, 305
 And next ensuing night, we held our way
 Amidst the waves : at length this isle we gain,
 O'er most of which Alcina holds her reign ;
 Which from her sister she unjustly won,
 Who claims it, by her father's will, her own ; 310
 For she alone was born in marriage bed,
 The others of incestuous mixture bred.

Ver. 303. *His following fortune—*] Here Boyardo entirely leaves Astolpho, and Ariosto takes up the story.

Ver. 309.—*from her sister—*] Logistilla : there were three sisters, Logistilla, Alcina, and Morgana. The allegory here is obvious. Alcina and Morgana represent luxury and lasciviousness ; Logistilla, reason or virtue ; these are continually at war with each other.

As these are of a fraudulent, impious mind,
 And prone to every deed of evil kind;
 So does the other chastly spend her days, 315
 And all her soul incline to virtue's ways.
 Her sisters both conspire against her state;
 And many troops have rais'd, with deadly hate,
 To drive the virgin wholly from the land,
 And have, at times, a hundred castles gain'd. 320
 Nor Logistilla (such her name) had known
 By this, the smallest portion here, her own;
 But that a gulph her kingdom here defends,
 And there a mountain's ridgy height ascends.
 Nor yet Alcina and Morgana cease, 325
 Nor let her ev'n possess this part in peace.
 As vice and shameful pleasures fill their breast,
 The virgin for her virtues they detest.
 But to return to what myself befel,
 And how I first became a tree, to tell. 330

Alcina gave me nameless charms to taste,
 And all on me her ardent passion plac'd:
 While in my arms such matchless sweets I press'd,
 I seem'd at once of every joy possest;
 Of every joy, which fortune's hands bestow 335
 So sparingly on mortals here below.
 France I forgot, each dearer care beside,
 And love alone my amorous thoughts employ'd.
 My eyes were fix'd upon her face so fair,
 While every wish began, and center'd there. 340
 Her former lovers she esteem'd no more,
 For many lovers she possess'd before:
 I was her joy, was with her night and day,
 And all the rest my high commands obey,
 Mine was her love, and mine the sovereign sway! 345 }

But wherefore do I thus inflame the wound
For which, I fear, no cure can e'er be found?
Why recollect my happy hours, and know
That all my former bliss is turn'd to woe?
Too late, alas! I found her wavering mind 350
In love inconstant as the changing wind!
For scarce two months I held the fairy's grace,
When a new youth was taken to my place.
Rejected then, I join'd the banish'd herd
That lost her love, as others were preferr'd: 355
Lest these o'er various lands and nations spread,
Should ere divulge the shameful life she led,
Some here, some there, her potent charms restrain
In various forms imprison'd to remain;
In beeches, olives, palms, or cedars clos'd; 360
Or such, as me you here behold expos'd:
In fountains some, and some in beasts confin'd,
As suits the wayward fairy's cruel mind.
And you, sir knight, that in ill hour have found,
By ways uncommon, this enchanted ground; 365
For whom some hapless lover must be spurn'd,
And to a senseless stone or river turn'd;
You shall such pleasures with Alcina find,
To call yourself the happiest of mankind;
But soon the common fate must be your own, 370
Chang'd to a beast, a fountain, tree, or stone.
Thus have I warn'd you of your dangerous state;
Not that I think you can elude your fate;
But yet, it fits you well inform'd to go,
And part, at least, of her deceits to know. 375
As different features in the face we find,
So differs too the genius of the mind;

And you, perhaps, some secret have in store
T' escape, what numbers ne'er escap'd before.

Rogero, who Astolpho knew by fame 380
The valiant cousin to his beauteous dame,
Much for his strange unheard-of fortune mourn'd,
Whose form was to a senseless myrtle turn'd;
And for her sake whose love his bosom fir'd
T' assist the unhappy warrior much desir'd: 385

But here his power no further aid affords
Than kind consoling tears, and friendly words;
Yet, all he can! and now he seeks to know
If he to Logistilla's lands might go,
By any windings over hill or plain, 390
To shun the snares of false Alcina's reign.
A different path there lay (the myrtle said)
Which through rough crags and thorny thickets led,
If to the hill he kept the better hand,
But hard the pass, for there a numerous band 395 }
Of armed men were plac'd to guard the land.

His thanks Rogero to the myrtle paid,
Then took his leave, and parted from the shade,
Instructed well: his courser, by the rein,
He leads, but dares not press his back again; 400
While various schemes he fashions in his mind,
How safely Logistilla's realms to find.

Firm was his purpose every means to try,
Rather than in Alcina's bondage lie.
And first, he thought again to mount his horse, 405
And spur him through the air a distant course:
But fear soon made him lay that thought aside,
Nor tempt the danger he so lately try'd.

Unless I err (thus to himself he said)

By force a passage yonder shall be made. 410

Now, as he pass'd along the ocean's side,
Alcina's stately city he descri'd.

An ample wall the whole encompass'd round,
Which wide enclos'd a mighty space of ground.

The height appear'd to reach the distant skies, 415
And seem'd of solid gold to wondering eyes!

When now more nearly to the walls he drew,
(Such walls as ne'er before could mortals view)

He left the plain and beaten path, that strait
Led o'er the meadow to the lofty gate; 420

And to the right, that tow'rd the mountain lay,
The warrior more securely took his way.

But soon an hideous crew oppos'd his course
With savage fury, and with brutal force.

A crew so strange was never seen before, 425
That such deform'd and monstrous figures wore.

Some, from the neck below appear'd like men,
While heads of apes and cats above were seen.

Ver. 423.—*an hideous crew*—] This passage is copied by Spenser, in his *Fairy Queen*, where he describes the troop of carnal lusts, besieging the fort or dwelling of temperance.

B. ii. C. xi.

Deformed creatures in strange difference;
Some having heads like harts, some like to snakes,
Some like wild boars late rouz'd out of the brakes,
.
Some like to hounds, some like to apes dismay'd,
Some like to puttocks all in plumes array'd.

These monsters that attempt to stop Rogero, in his passage to Logistilla, or Virtue, signifying the different species of vice in the most brutal and sordid shapes. Their captain is Idleness, the promoter of every evil.

Some, running, stamp'd with goatish feet the road,
And some the shape of nimble centaurs show'd. 430
Lascivious youths were there, and old men mad;
Some naked, some in hairy vestments clad,
One, without reins, a speedy courser rides;
This, a slow ass; and that, an ox bestrides:
Some on a centaur's back their seat maintain; 435
Some press the ostrich, eagle, or the crane:
One held a bowl; a horn another blew:
Female and male; some, mixtures of the two.
A file, one bore, and one a ladder took;
A shovel, this; and that, an iron hook. 440
The captain of the band was there beheld,
His face was bloated, and his paunch was swell'd.
Upon a tortoise heavily he sate,
And mov'd along the field in tardy state;
His limbs supported as he pass'd along; 445
Drowsy with wine his heavy eye-lids hung.
Some from his face and forehead wip'd the sweat;
And others fann'd him to abate the heat.
One, form'd with human feet, with hands and breast,
But like a dog his head and ears confest, 450
With barking sought Rogero's course to stay,
And make him to the city bend his way.
You threat in vain, (reply'd th'undaunted knight)
While I have power to wield this sword in fight.
As thus he spoke, his shining blade he drew, 455
And brandish'd it before the monster's view:
The monster thought to strike him with his spear,
But this Rogero saw, and, drawing near,
Swift through his paunch the deadly weapon sent,
That through his back, a foot behind, it went. 460

And now, his courage rous'd, he brac'd his shield,
But still his foes more numerous press'd the field,
On every hand at once attack'd the knight,
Who with unyielding force maintain'd the fight;
While, as amid the furious throng he press'd, 465
Some to the teeth he clove, and some the breast.
Shield, helm, and cuirass no defence afford
Against the edge of his descending sword.
But now, thick swarming, round the youth they close,
And so on every side his course oppose, 470
To force the throng a greater strength demands
Than huge Briareus with his hundred hands.
Yet from the covering had the knight reveal'd
Before their eyes the necromancer's shield,
(That shield whose lustre laid the gazers low, 475
Left by Atlantes at his saddle bow)
At once their headlong fury had been quell'd,
And prostrate all to press the earth compell'd:
But here his generous soul perchance disdain'd
To gain a conquest, not by valour gain'd. 480
He fought determin'd rather on the field
To die, than to such foes his freedom yield:
When sudden from the gate appear'd in sight
(Where shone the walls with golden splendor bright)
Two lovely dames, whose air and habit show'd 485
That not to lineage mean their birth they ow'd;

Ver. 485.—*lovely dames*,—] By these two ladies, who easily persuade Rogero to turn again and enter the city of Alcina, may be generally understood, that though a good disposition will for a long time withstand the assaults of vice, which comes undisguised in its native deformity, it may notwithstanding yield to that temptation, which appears dressed up in the garb of decency.

Nor seem'd brought up in humble cottage state,
 But bred in rich apartments of the great;
 Each on a beauteous unicorn was plac'd,
 Whose snowy hue the ermin's white defac'd. 490
 So lovely both were form'd, so richly drest,
 And every look such dignity express'd,
 That each enraptur'd gazer seem'd to own
 Their charms were worthy heavenly eyes alone.
 Beauty and gallantry such forms must wear 495
 Would they embody'd to the sight appear!

And now the damsels near the meadow drew,
 Where brave Rogerø closely prest their view.
 At once on every side disperse the bands:
 The ladies to the knight present their hands, 500
 Who, while his visage flush'd with rosy-red,
 Return'd them thanks for such a courteous deed;
 Then, at their suit, agreed to turn once more
 And seek the golden gate he shunn'd before.

The ornaments that o'er the portal rise, 505
 And jutting forward, seem to meet the eyes,
 On every side are richly cover'd round,
 With jewels that in eastern climes abound.

Ver. 489.—*a beauteous unicorn*.—] I see no particular allegorical allusion in the unicorns, on which these ladies are seated; which seem merely inserted for the sake of poetical description, and may be very allowable in this author, when Tasso, in the historical part of his poem, has employed the same fictitious animals to draw the chariot of Armida.

Jer. Del. B. xvii.

..... Freno il dotto auriga al giogo adorno,
 Quattro unicorni, a coppia a coppia avvinti.

Beneath the golden yoke, in pairs constrain'd,
 Four unicorns the skilful driver rein'd.

Ver. 244.

Huge stately columns, by a master-hand
Of di'mond fram'd, the solid weight sustain'd. 510
So fair a structure ne'er before was seen
To sate the ravish'd eyes of mortal men !
Before the threshold wanton damsels wait,
Or sport between the pillars of the gate :
But beauty more had brighten'd in their face, 515
Had modesty attemper'd every grace.
In vestures green each damsel swept the ground,
Their temples fair with leafy garlands crown'd.
These, with a courtcous welcome led the knight
To this sweet paradise of soft delight. 520
And sure we this a paradise may name,
Where gentle love first lights his lambent flame :
Where festive pleasures every day employ,
Where every moment passes wing'd with joy :
No thoughts of hoary age depress the mind, 525
Nor care, nor want can here an entrance find ;
While, with her horn, obsequious Plenty stands
To pour her riches forth from willing hands ;
And with a smiling front for ever clear,
Inviting April revels through the year. 530
Enamour'd youths, and tender damsels, seem
To chant their loves beside a purling stream.
Some, by a branching tree, or mountain's shade,
In sports and dances press the downy glade ;
While one discloses to his friend, apart, 535
The secret transports of his amorous heart.
High o'er the beech and oak with wing display'd,
High o'er the lofty pine and laurel shade,
The little loves in sportive circles fly,
And view their triumphs with exulting eye: 540

One at a lover's breast his weapon aims ;
With fraudulent art his nets another frames :
Here in the stream they temper shafts, and there
On circling stone their blunted points repair.

A stately courser soon was given the knight, 545
Of colour bay, and gallant in the fight ;
His costly trappings, glorious to behold,
Were all with jewels deck'd, and shone with gold !
The old magician's steed, of winged kind,
A youth receiv'd, and slowly led behind. 550

The damsels now, whose aid dispers'd the band
That durst Rogero's purpos'd course withstand,
Thus, to the knight their gentle speech address'd :
My lord ! your valiant deeds, this day confess'd,
Have given us courage from your hand to claim 555

A task that well befits your matchless fame :
Soon shall we come, where in our way there glides
A flood, that in two parts the plain divides.

A cruel wretch, we Eriphila name,
Defends the bridge, and passage of the stream : 560
On all that tempt the pass she furious flies ;
Dreadful she seems, a giantess in size !

Poisonous her bite, long tushes arm her jaws ;
And like a bear's, her nails and shaggy paws :
Nor here alone her threatening rage she bends, 565
And 'gainst each passenger the bridge defends ;
But oft has round the garden-shades defac'd
With giant step, and laid their beauty waste.

Ver. 559.~*Eriphila*—] *Eriphila* is explained to mean avarice : she is said to guard the bridge that leads to Alcina, to paint the avarice of women that will not satisfy the amorous desires of men without liberal rewards.

Know, that the monstrous crew, whose fury late
Oppos'd your course without the golden gate, 570
Her offspring are; like her for prey they lust,
And like their dam are cruel and unjust.

Rogero then: Not one alone demand,
But ask a hundred battles at my hand.
Whate'er defence my prowess can afford, 575
Is yours—command my person and my sword:
'Tis hence, these shining arms my limbs enfold,
Not lands to conquer, or to purchase gold,
But to display, to all, my guardian care,
Much more to dames so courteous, and so fair! 580

The dames return'd him thanks with grateful heart,
In words that equall'd well his great desert.
In converse thus they pass'd, till near they drew,
Where both the bridge and stream appear'd in view.
There they the guardian of the pass behold 585
With jewels blazing rich on arms of gold.

But, 'till another book, I cease to tell,
What with the giantess the knight befel.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ROGERO encounters Eriphila, and, conducted by the two damsels, arrives at the palace of Alcina, who receives him with great joy : he is seduced by her allurements, and leads a life of luxury and effeminacy. Bradamant, hearing no tidings of him, since he was carried away by the griffin-horse, is in great affliction for his absence ; she is met by Melissa, who undertakes to deliver him. Melissa assumes the form of Atlantes, and accosts the young warrior, reproaching him with his degeneracy.

THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

WHO travels into foreign climes, shall find
What ne'er before was imag'd to his mind ;
Which, when he tells, the hearers shall despise,
And deem his strange adventures empty lies.
The herd unletter'd nothing will believe 5
But what their senses plainly can perceive ;

Ver. 5. *The herd unletter'd—*] The author here plainly declares, that the wonderful tales related by him have a concealed allegory : so Berni, *Orlando Innam.* B. i. C. xxv.

Questi draghi fatati, questi incanti,
Questi giardini, e libri, e corni, e cani,
Ed huomini selvaticchi, e giganti,
E fiere, e mostri, ch' hanno visi umani,
Son fatti per dar pasto agli ignoranti,
Ma voi, ch' avete gl' intelletti sani,
Mirate la dottrina, che s' asconde
Sotte queste coperte alte e profonde.

These fated dragons, every magic change,
These books, and horns, and dogs, and gardens strange :

Hence I shall ne'er with common minds prevail,
 But little credit will they yield my tale.
 Yet what imports to me the vulgar ear,
 When these my words, without conception, hear? 10
 To you I write, whose judgment can descry
 The secret truths that, veil'd in fable, lie.
 I left you there, when to the bridge and stream
 By Eriphila kept, the warrior came.
 A coat of mail of finest steel she wore, 15
 With gems of various colours cover'd o'er;
 The ruby red, the chrysolite was seen,
 The yellow topaz, and the emerald green.
 Her giant bulk no common steed bestrode;
 A mighty wolf sustain'd her ponderous load: 20
 A wolf she rode; and o'er the river crost,
 With stately trappings of no vulgar cost.

These savage men, these shapes of giant race,
 And beasts and monsters with a human face,
 Are feign'd to please the vulgar ear: but you,
 Whom favouring pow'rs with better sense endue,
 Can see the doctrine sage, that hidden lies
 Beneath these mystic fables' deep disguise.

Thus Milton:

And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung
 Of turneys and of trophies hung,
 Of forests and enchantments drear,
 Where more is meant than meets the ear.

Il Penseroso.

Ver. 11. *To you I write,*—] Some suppose that Ariosto here particularly addresses himself to Hippolito and Alphonso; but it rather seems a general apostrophe to every reader of taste and discernment.

Ver. 20. *A mighty wolf*—] By the wolf, which is represented without reins, may be signified the insatiable nature of avarice, which is not to be restrained,

A beast so large Apulia never bred;
High as an ox he rear'd his towering head :
His frothy mouth no curbing bit restrain'd, 25
Nor know I how his foaming course she rein'd;
Her scarf a sandy hue display'd to sight,
And o'er her armour cast a sullen light :
Rais'd on her crest, and in her targe she held
A pictur'd toad with loathsome poison swell'd. 30
The damsels show'd her to the expecting knight,
Where, from the bridge, she stood prepar'd for fight ;
And, as her custom was, his course to stay :
Soon as she saw Rogero on the way,
Fiercely she bade him turn : he nought reply'd, 35
But grasp'd his spear, and her to fight defy'd.
Nor less the giantess, with active heat,
Spurr'd her huge wolf, and fix'd her in the seat ;
And, as she ran, her spear in rest she took,
While trembling earth beneath her fury shook : 40
But soon, o'erthrown, supine her limbs were spread ;
So strong Rogero struck beneath her head,
That, forc'd before the dreadful lance to yield,
Six feet beyond she tumbled on the field.
Then swift he drew his falchion from his side, 45
Her head from her huge body to divide ;
As well he might, while in the flowery way,
Already senseless Eriphila lay:
But here the ladies cry'd—Enough, sir knight,
No further urge the vengeance of the fight : 50

Ver. 48.—*already senseless*—] Eriphila, being overthrown, but not killed, is said to denote that liberality used at the instigation of vice, is not perfect virtue, which entirely roots up avarice.

Behold her quell'd—then sheath your conquering sword,
Let us our way resume, and pass the ford.

This said: they for awhile their course pursu'd
Amidst the covert of a mazy wood,
'There through a narrow craggy path they went, 55
And reach'd at length the hill, with steep ascent;
Where, on a spacious plain, the youth beheld
A sumptuous pile that every pile excell'd.
First of her court, the fair Alcina press'd,
Impatient to receive the stranger guest: 60
Before the portal, with a comely grace,
She gave him courteous welcome to the place;
While all such honour paid the noble knight,
As if some God had left his realms of light.
The palace with resplendent lustre shin'd 65
Above the boasted wealth of human kind:
Fair is the dome; but fairer are the train
Whose angel forms its stately walls contain!
Alcina yet excels the rest by far,
As Phœbus' rays obscure each feeble star. 70

Her matchless person every charm combin'd
Form'd in th' idea of a painter's mind.
Bound in a knot behind, her ringlets roll'd
Down her soft neck, and seem'd like waving gold.
Her cheeks with lilies mix the blushing rose: 75
Her forehead high, like polish'd iv'ry shows.
Beneath two arching brows with splendor shone
Her sparkling eyes, each eye a radiant sun!

Ver. 71. *Her matchless person—*] This luxuriant description of the beauty of Alcina, is quoted at large, as an idea of perfect beauty, by Dolce, in his dialogue on painting; of which the English reader has been favoured with an ingenious translation.

Here artful glances, winning looks appear,
 And wanton Cupid lies in ambush here : 80
 'Tis hence he bends his bow, he points his dart,
 'Tis hence he steals th' unwary gazer's heart.
 Her nose so truly shap'd, the faultless frame
 Not envy can deface, nor art can blame.
 Her lips beneath, with pure vermilion bright. 85
 Present two rows of orient pearl to sight :
 Here those soft words are form'd whose power detains
 Th' obdurate soul in love's alluring chains ;
 And here the smiles receive their infant birth,
 Whose sweets reveal a paradise on earth. 90
 Her neck and breast were white as falling snows ;
 Round was her neck, and full her bosom rose.
 Firm as the budding fruit, with gentle swell,
 Each lovely breast alternate rose and fell.
 Thus, on the margin of the peaceful seas, 95
 The waters heave before the fanning breeze.
 Her arms well turn'd, and of a dazzling hue,
 With perfect beauty gratify'd the view.

Ver. 93. *Firm as the budding fruit,*—] The expression in the Italian is :

..... due pome acerbe
 two unripe apples :

Spenser has much the same image in his description of Belphebe :

Her dainty paps, which like young fruit in May,
 Now little 'gan to swell, and being ty'd
 Through their thin veil their places only signify'd.

B. ii. C. iii.

Dryden, in his *Cymon and Iphigenia*, copies Spenser :

Her bosom to the view was only bare,
 Where two beginning paps were scarcely spy'd,
 For yet their places were but signify'd.

Her taper fingers long and fair to see,
From every rising vein and swelling free ; 100
And from her vest below, with new delight,
Her slender foot attracts the lover's sight.
Not Argus' self her other charms could spy,
So closely veil'd from every longing eye ;
Yet may we judge the graces she reveal'd 105
Surpass'd not those her modest garb conceal'd,
Which strove in vain from fancy's eye to hide,
Each angel charm that seem'd to heaven ally'd.

In all she did her ready snares were hung,
Whether she spoke, or mov'd, or laugh'd, or sung. 110
No wonder then Rogero's heart was caught
By her, whose show of love enslav'd his thought.
No more he can the myrtle's counsel trust,
No more believe her cruel and unjust.
He thinks deceit can never find a place 115
In the soft smiles of such a lovely face ;
But rather now believes Alcina's power
Had justly chang'd Astolpho on the shore ;
That rage and envy made the knight defame
With lying tales the fair Alcina's name. 120
The damsel whom he once so dearly held,
Is, of a sudden, from his heart expell'd.
The secret, by her art, the fairy found
To heal his breast of every former wound :
Then let Rogero some indulgence claim, 125
Since magic charms expung'd his virtuous flame.

Now, while they feast, the lute and tuneful lyre
Th' enraptur'd soul with harmony inspire :
Through the wide dome the trembling music floats,
And undulating air conveys the notes. 130

One with soft lays would tender bosoms move,
And paints the passions, and the joys of love ;
Or sweetly bids inventive fancy rise,
That brings poetic visions to the eyes.
Not all the festivals in story told, 135
By Syrian luxury prepar'd of old ;
Not that which Cleopatra's royal board
With pomp display'd before her Latian lord,
Could with this sumptuous banquet claim regard,
Which for the knight th' enamour'd dame prepar'd : 140
Not such is seen, when Ganymede above
His service ministers to mighty Jove !

The tables now and viands thence convey'd,
The joyous train a pleasing circle made ;
While each soft whisper'd in the other's ear, 145
Some secret, sweet to tell, or sweet to hear !
A grateful sport ! by which, from all conceal'd,
The lovers well their amorous thoughts reveal'd ;
Till both, at length, impell'd by soft desire,
That night agreed t' indulge their mutual fire. 150
This gentle pastime done, the pages came
Before their usual hour, with torches' flame
To chase the night : a rich retinue led
The brave Rogero to a stately bed.

Ver. 136. *By Syrian luxury*—] The successors of Ninus, first king of the Assyrians, to Sardanapalus, were famous for their luxury and effeminacy, and delighted in costly banquets.

Ver. 138.—*her Latio lord,*] The poet is said here to mean Julius Caesar, who, after the death of Pompey, was entertained by Cleopatra, with a most magnificent banquet: or, perhaps, by this may be understood Marc Anthony, with whom she was known to have lived in the most amazing prodigality.

There they partook a slight repast anew 155
Of wine and fruits, and then the train withdrew ;
And, due obedience paid their gallant guest,
All to their several rooms retir'd to rest.

Now lay the knight in sheets that breath'd perfume,
And seem'd the labour of Arachne's loom ; 160
Impatient, listening with attentive ear ;
At every sound he deems Alcina near ;
Each fancy'd tread alarms his beating breast ;
Now rais'd by wishes, now by doubts deprest !
Th' alluring fair, bedew'd with odours sweet, 165
Prepar'd at length the longing knight to meet ;
And, when each eye was clos'd, with glowing charms
She stole in secret to Rogero's arms.

When the fond youth, that held Astolpho's place,
Survey'd the beauties of that heavenly face ; 170
And drank the poison from her sparkling eyes ;
Through every vein a sudden lightning flies !
Then leaping from the couch, with eager haste,
His clasping arms enfold her lovely waste :
He gluts his ravish'd sight ! the nymph undrest 175
Was cover'd only with a sarc'net vest,
Which o'er a thin and spotless lawn she threw,
Of finest texture and of snowy hue.
The mantle falls before the furious knight,
And leaves alone the slender lawn in sight, 180
Whose thin transparent folds her charms disclose,
As a clear glass the lily or the rose.
Not half so close the ivy leaves are seen
Around a plant to wreathe their curling green,
As twin'd in wanton folds the lovers lay, 185
And in soft murmurs breath'd their souls away,

While from their lips such balmy sweets they drew
As Ind, with all her spices, never knew.

Thus liv'd in wanton bliss the lawless pair;
While, through the palace, with officious care, 190
All, at Rogero's nod, obsequious stand,
For so th' enamour'd fairy gives command.
Whate'er can charm the heart, or lure the sense
To full delight, these happy seats dispense.
The feast, the game, the race their joys enhance, 195
The scene, the bath, the tilting and the dance.
Now, by clear streams, with grateful shade o'ercast,
They read the amorous lays of ages past:
Now midst deep vales, or smiling hills prepare
To hunt the mazes of the fearful hare: 200
Now with sagacious dogs the bush they beat
To rouse the whirring pheasants from their seat:
Now for the thrush fallacious springes set;
Now the sweet juniper with birdlime wet:
Now with barb'd hook, or meshy net they try 205
From quiet floods to drag the scaly fry.

While thus Rogero lives a joyous guest,
King Agramant and Charles are hardly prest;
Whose story shall not yet escape my mind,
Nor must I leave fair Bradamant behind; 210
Who long, ah! long, bewail'd her dearest knight,
By strange adventure ravish'd from her sight.
To her, before the rest, I turn my strain,
And tell, how far she sought with fruitless pain
Through cities, towns and camps; how far she pass'd
O'er mountains, plains, and many a dreary waste; 216

In vain each day of all she met, enquir'd;
She heard no news of what her soul desir'd.
Oft to the host of Saracens she went,
And sought her lover there from tent to tent : 220
Between her lips the wondrous ring she held,
Which kept her safe from every eye conceal'd :
She cannot, dares not yet believe him dead,
For such a warrior's death had doubtless spread
From where the tide of fam'd Hydaspes flows, 225
To where the sun descends to his repose.
Uncertain of his fate ; she hopes, she fears :
Her sad companions are her sighs and tears !
At length she fix'd once more the cave to seek,
Where Merlin, from his tomb, was wont to speak, 230
And round the shrine such deep affliction show,
The marble cold should soften at her woe.
There might she learn if yet her knight surviv'd,
Or lay, by doom severe, of life depriv'd ;
And thence, inform'd, her future course pursue, 235
As from the sage her counsel best she drew.
With this intent she took her lonely way
Tow'rds the thick forest that by Poitiers lay ;
Where deep the vocal tomb of Merlin stood,
Hid in drear caves, surrounded by a wood. 240
But that enchantress, whose benignant mind
Reveal'd to Bradamant her race design'd,
Each day desir'd to learn the virgin's state,
And often try'd her art t' explore her fate.
Rogero freed and lost again she knew, 245
And how to India's distant climes he flew :
She saw him living in luxurious peace,
In wanton feasting and inglorious ease ;

Unmindful of himself, his promis'd fame,
His sovereign's welfare, and his beauteous dame; 250
And thus she fear'd the flower of youthful bloom
A knight so gentle might in sloth consume,
While that pure portion of the ethereal ray
Which still survives, when all is breathless clay,
Th' immortal part, in sensual pleasure tost 255
Would soon be shipwreck'd, and for ever lost !
But that sage matron, whose attentive mind
Watch'd o'er the good himself had cast behind,
Resolv'd through irksome ways of toil and pain,
To bring him back to virtue's path again. 260
His med'cines thus the wise physician deals,
And oft by fire, and steel, and poison heals :
Repining first, the patient feels the smart,
Then owns the saving aid with grateful heart.
Yet arduous was the task her thoughts design'd ; 265
For old Atlantes, with affection blind,
Who sought but to preserve from dangerous strife
In ease inglorious his Rogero's life ;
Who rather wish'd him thus to lead his days,
Than change a year of shame for endless praise, 270
Had sent him to Alcina's isle afar,
There to forget the sound of arms and war ;
And as a sage well vers'd in magic art,
He bound in chains so firm the fairy's heart,
She ne'er again her love should disengage, 275
Though good Rogero liv'd to Nestor's age.
Now to the virgin let us bend our view,
Whose prophesying skill the future knew ;
Who, while from realm to realm she thoughtful past,
The wandering Amon's daughter met at last. 280

When Bradamant beheld Melissa near,
 A sudden hope dispell'd her former fear;
 Till, struck with grief, th' unhappy virgin heard
 Her lover prisoner, and his mind ensnar'd
 With pleasure's poison'd bait; but soon to calm 285
 Her dread, th' enchantress pours the healing balm;
 And plights her faith, ere many days are o'er,
 Rogero to her presence to restore.
 Give me (she cry'd) the ring, whose powerful charm
 The wearer shields from every magic harm: 290
 Soon will I put Alcina's arts to flight,
 Who now detains your lover from your sight.
 When evening rises will I take my way,
 And reach the Indian climes by dawn of day,
 Melissa spoke; and to the listening dame 295
 Her purpose told, to draw the youth from shame,
 And send him back once more to France and fame. }

Then from her hand the noble damsel gave
 The wondrous ring; nor this alone to save
 The knight had given, but with an equal mind 300
 Had sent her heart, and life itself resign'd.
 She gives the ring; and to her care commends
 Herself, her lover more; to him she sends
 A thousand greetings that her truth display,
 And, parting, to Provence directs her way. 305
 A different path the sage Melissa pass'd,
 But soon as evening-shade the skies o'ercast,
 She rais'd a palfrey by her magic art,
 With one foot red, but black each other part:
 Some fiend infernal, seeming thus in show, 310
 Whom by her spells she drew from realms below:

On this she mounted; both her feet were bare,
Ungirt her gown, and loose her flowing hair.
Then with such speed through yielding clouds she flew,
Next morn Alcina's isle appear'd in view. 315

Arriv'd, a strange illusion to the sight,
She adds a foot of stature to her height;
While every limb enlarg'd, like his appears
Who nurs'd Rogero in his infant years:
A hoary beard she fixes on her chin, 320
And fills with wrinkles all her wither'd skin:
So well she feigns his speech, his voice, his air,
It seems as if Atlantes' self was there.

This done; awhile she undiscover'd stood,
Till, as it chanc'd, one day the youth she view'd 325
Apart in solitude; unusual sight!

For scarce Alcina ever left the knight.
Now, to her wish, she found the youth retir'd
To taste the freshness which the morn inspir'd,
Beside a stream that from the hill's descent 330
To a clear lake with gentle murmur went.

His garments with effeminacy made,
Luxurious sloth and indolence display'd;
Wrought by Alcina's hands, of silk and gold
Mingled with art, and costly to behold. 335

A string of jewels from his neck he wore,
That, to his breast descending, hung before;

Ver. 332. *His garments with effeminacy made,*] This whole passage is a copy of Virgil, *Æneid* IV. where Mercury is sent by Jupiter to warn *Æneas* to leave Carthage. Tasso has closely followed both these poets, in his *Jerusalem Delivered*, B. xvi. but particularly Ariosto. *Æneas*, Rogero, and Rinaldo, make pretty near the same figure.

And either warlike arm, that once could wield
The heaviest weapons in the listed field,
A bracelet bound: in either ear he hung 340
A ring of golden wire, to which was strung
A costly pearl, whose price by far excell'd
What India or Arabia e'er beheld.
His curling locks in nicest order set,
Wav'd round his head with liquid odours wet. 345
His gestures and his looks a mind declare
Bred to the wanton pleasures of the fair.
Rogero now his name can only boast,
The rest is all in foul corruption lost:
So far estrang'd from what he was before 350
By fatal sorcery and beauty's power!

Now in Atlantes' form th' enchantress stood
Before the youth, that form he oft had view'd;
With that stern eye, and countenance severe,
Which, when a child, he us'd so much to fear. 355

Then thus—Are these the glorious fruits at last
Of all my cares, of all my labours past?
Was it for this thy infancy I bred,
With marrow of the bears and lions fed?
Taught thee in gloomy caves or forest-lands, 360
To strangle serpents with thy tender hands?
Panthers and tigers of their claws deprive,
And tear their tushes from the boars alive?
That, after all, thou shouldst at length appear
Alcina's Atys or Adonis here? 365
Is this the fate which in the stars I read?
Is this what dreams and auguries have said?

Ver. 365. — *Atys* —] A beautiful youth beloved of Cybele, the mother of the gods.

'Twas promis'd, from thy birth, when thou hadst gain'd
The ripening years which now thou hast attain'd,
That not a chief should match thy boundless praise : 370
And wouldst thou thus thy boasted trophies raise !
Thus wouldst thou rival Alexander's name,
Thus gain a Cæsar's, or a Scipio's fame ?
Who could have thought (O scandal to the brave)
To see thee here Alcina's wanton slave ! 375
And that thy thralldom may to all be known,
Thy neck and arms her shameful shackles own.
If for thyself, fame cannot move thy mind,
Nor the great deeds that Heaven for thee design'd,
Yet wherefore from thy godlike race withhold 380
The future good, my lips have oft foretold ?
A race (so fate decrees) to mortal eyes
More dear than Phœbus' light that gilds the skies !
Forbid not souls t' exist, which Heaven shall frame
With purest portions of ethereal flame : 385
Nor blast the promis'd palms, which virtue yields
In peaceful counsels or triumphant fields,
By which thy sons, and each succeeding name,
Shall give to Italy her former fame.
But, o'er the rest, let two thy thoughts engage, 390
Two brethren, glories of their favour'd age !
Alphonso and Hippolito, whose praise,
O'er all thy line, shall bless their happy days.
On these I dwell, and joy to find thee hear
Their virtuous honours with a willing ear, 395
As if exulting in thy mind to trace
Such worthies springing from thy godlike race.
How has this queen thy fond affections won ?
But thousands, like herself, the same had done.

Of all the numbers that her arts believ'd, 400
Thou know'st what recompence their loves receiv'd.
But that you may Alcina's faith behold,
I will her frauds and each disguise unfold.
This ring receive; and to the dame repair;
Then mark if she deserves the name of fair. 405

She ceas'd; nor aught abash'd Rogero said,
But, silent, hung to earth his drooping head.
Meantime she on his finger fix'd the ring,
That could once more his wandering senses bring:
Soon as the knight returning truth confess'd, 410
Such deep remorse his conscious soul depress'd,
He wish'd that yawning earth would open wide,
His visage, from the face of man, to hide.

Her task perform'd, aside the enchantress threw
Her borrow'd form, and stood disclos'd to view; 415
Then to the wondering youth her name reveal'd,
Nor kept the cause, for which she came, conceal'd:
Sent by the fairest of her sex, whose care
No longer could her lover's absence bear;
To free him thence, where magic bands control, 420
In shameful servitude, his manly soul:
That old Atlantes' borrow'd form she chose
A deeper reverence on his sense t' impose.
That gentle maid, whose fond affections burn
For thee, and merit well a kind return: 425
To whom, reflect what gratitude demands
For freedom late recover'd at her hands,
This ring, a safe defence from spelful art,
Here sends by me, and would have sent her heart,
If aught her heart avail'd to give thee aid: 430
The love of Bradamant she then display'd,

And, with her other noble virtues join'd,
 Extoll'd the courage of her dauntless mind :
 Till clearly banish'd from Rogero's breast,
 She made him soon Alcina's name detest, 435
 So late ador'd !—the ring his foe disarms,
 Preserves him safe from future magic harms,
 And strips Alcina of her borrow'd charms. }
 As when a child, who ripen'd fruit has stor'd,
 In time forgetful of his former hoard, 440
 By fortune to the place again convey'd,
 Where many days before his trust was laid,
 Beholds the unthought of change with vast surprise,
 Obscene and putrid, hateful to his eyes !
 Rogero thus, by sage Melissa sent, 445
 When to Alcina's sight again he went,
 For that fair dame, the fairest of the fair,
 Whom late he left, now, wondrous to declare,
 A shape so loathsome saw, that search around,
 One more deform'd and old could ne'er be found. 450

Ver. 447. *For that fair dame,*] The allegory is here closely kept up ; where the eyes of the understanding being cleared by the ring (reason), vice, which before appeared beautiful to the depraved imagination, then resumes its natural deformity.

“Spenser's Duessa, who had before appeared young and beautiful, divested of her rich apparel, is discovered to be a loathsome old woman. She is a copy of Ariosto's Alcina. The circumstances of Duessa's discovery are literally translated from the Italian poet.

See Fairy Queen.

A loathly wrinkled hag, ill-favour'd, old

.

Her crafty head was altogether bald

And

Was overgrown with scurf and filthy scald,

Her teeth out of her rotten gums were fled.”

Warton's Obs. on Spenser.

Her face was wrinkled, sharp, and pale of hue,
Her hair was turn'd to grey, and thinly grew;
Six spans in stature could she scarcely boast,
And every tooth her gums, disarm'd, had lost;
As if her life more length of years had seen 455
Than Cuma's prophetess, or Priam's queen.

Yet such the force of spells, and magic power,
She seem'd in prime of age and beauty's flower:
But soon Rogero banish'd her his thought,
When all her useless wiles to light were brought. 460

Yet, by Melissa warn'd, he still suppress'd
The secret purpose of his wary breast:
At length his arms he seiz'd, that long had laid
Neglected, and his manly limbs array'd:
But first, each light suspicion to remove, 465

He told Alcina he desir'd to prove
If, living thus a recreant from the field,
His hands could yet their wonted weapons wield.

Then Balisarda girding to his side,
So was his falchion nam'd, of temper try'd, 470
He took the buckler, whose enchanted blaze
Distracts the fainting eyes of all that gaze;
And with the silken covering o'er it hung,
The massy weight across his shoulders flung.

Then to the stall he went, and bade with speed 475
To fit the reins and saddle on a steed
Of coal-black hue: Melissa chose the horse;
For well she knew his swiftness in the course.

Ver. 469. — *Balisarda* —] The sword stolen from Orlando by Brunello, and given to Rogero.

Him, Rabicano nam'd, and once the right
 Of fam'd Astolpho, with that hapless knight 480
 Who late was fix'd a myrtle on the shore,
 The watry monster to this island bore.
 Rogero might the griffin-horse unbind,
 That next to Rabicano stood confin'd;
 But here Melissa warn'd him to refrain, 485
 As he but ill obey'd the curbing rein,
 And promis'd soon t' instruct him to bestride
 The flying courser, and his fury guide;
 And less they would suspect his flight design'd,
 If, parting thence, he left his steed behind. 490
 Rogero all the maid's advice pursu'd,
 Who, still invisible, beside him stood;
 Then from the fatal palace swift he rode,
 That ancient harlot's infamous abode;
 And with impatience to the portal fled, 495
 That tow'rd's the realms of Logistilla led.
 Here, on the guard at unawares he fell,
 And forc'd his passage through with pointed steel:
 While some he deeply wounded, some he slew,
 Then o'er the bridge with speed impetuous flew; 500

Ver. 479. — *Rabicano* — } Boyardo relates, that this horse was produced by enchantment, and nourished only with the air. He was at first the property of Argalia, but when Ferrau drove him loose, (see General View of Boyardo's Story) he returned to the cave where he was bred, and whence he was taken by Argalia. Rinaldo, having lost his horse Bayardo, arrives at this cave where Rabican was kept; he kills a giant and two griffins that guarded him, and gets possession of the horse: Rinaldo afterwards going to Albracca, recovers his own from Astolpho, and leaves Rabican with him in his stead.

See Orlando Innam.

And soon was distant far, ere spreading fame
Could to Alcina's ears his flight proclaim.

Th' ensuing book shall tell what course he past,
Till he to Logistilla came at last.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE ARGUMENT.

ROGERO makes his escape from Alcina, and travels towards the country of Logistilla. Rinaldo leaves Scotland, and arrives in England, where he obtains succours from the regent to be transported to the assistance of Charlemain. Angelica is carried by magic art into a desolate island, where she is cast into a deep sleep by a hermit: from this place she is taken away by mariners to be devoured by a sea-monster. Orlando, disturbed with a dream, quits the city of Paris, then besieged by Agramant, and goes out disguised in search of his mistress.

THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

WHAT strange enchanters in our times abound !
What strange enchantresses alike are found !
Who, changing features, with deceitful art
Of either sex, entrap th' unwary heart :
Nor do they work these wonders on the mind 5
By influence of the stars, or sprights confin'd ;
But with dissimulation, fraud, and lies,
They bind it with indissoluble ties !
He, who from fortune can such grace obtain
The ring of fair Angelica to gain ; 10
Or rather that of reason, should display
Their foul disguises to the face of day.
How blest Rogero then ! whose ring dispell'd
Each error that his soul had prisoner held.

Ver. 11. *Or rather that of reason,--*] The allegory is here plainly opened by the poet.

Rogero, as my tale before declar'd, 15
With Rabican came arm'd before the guard;
And when all unprovided these he spy'd,
Kept not his weapon idle by his side.
Ere far he rode the distant wood to gain,
He met a servant of Alcina's train. 20
With ready falcon on his fist he came,
As wont each day to scour the field for game:
Oft to a neighbouring lake he let him fly;
The country round could store of prey supply.
He rode a palfrey, not with trappings gay; 25
His faithful dog companion of his way.
Soon as he saw Rogero's speed, his mind
Alcina's fugitive in him divin'd:
Advancing near, he, with a haughty air,
Bade him th' occasion of his flight declare: 30
The knight disdaining question, nought replies;
To whom th' impatient swain indignant cries:
What shall you say, if spite of your intent,
I, with this falcon, should your haste prevent?
This said, he let the falcon fly, whose speed 35
Not Rabican could, in his course, exceed;
The rider next, alighting from his seat,
Releas'd his palfrey from the curbing bit;

Ver. 20. *He met a servant—*] This passage considered literally has something odd in it: neither is the allegory of the servant, horse, dog, and falcon, very obvious. An Italian commentator thus explains it:

“The four animals that attack Rogero, are the four passions that govern the soul: the servant denotes fear; the bird, desire; the dog, grief; and the palfrey, joy. The shield signifies that the passions are to be conquered by opposing to them their contraries.”

Who, snorting, spurn'd the ground, and instant flew
Swift as an arrow from the sounding yew: 40
No less the falc'ner follow'd close behind;
As sent by fire, or borne on wings of wind:
The dog with Rabican pursu'd the race,
As leopards hold the fearful hare in chace.

Now stopp'd the generous youth, who blush'd to view
A man on foot so bold his flight pursue; 46
Who bore no weapon but a slender wand
With which he might his sporting dog command.
But when no other arms Rogero saw,
He much disdain'd on him his sword to draw. 50
The falc'ner fiercely now attacks the knight!
The dog attempts his courser's legs to bite.
Near Rabican th' unbridled palfrey wheels,
And oft assails him with his spurning heels:
With sounding wing the falcon terrifies, 55
And strikes him with her talons as she flies.
The steed, whom such a strange assault dismays,
But ill the bridle and the spur obeys.
At length, constrain'd, his sword Rogero shows
Unsheath'd; now here, now there his irksome foes 60
He threats with edge or point, but threats in vain;
For still his irksome foes th' attack maintain.
He fears, if he delays, he soon shall view
Alcina, with her train, his flight pursue:
He hears loud clamours fill the vales around; 65
He hears the bells, the drums, the trumpets sound;
Now ill advis'd he seems, with sword in hand,
Against a man unarm'd, and dog, to stand:
'Twere better to disclose to view, he thought,
The shining buckler by Atlantes wrought; 70

Then from the shield the crimson covering rais'd ;
In every eye the flashing splendor blaz'd :
The falc'ner tumbles senseless on the plain ;
The dog and palfrey fall ; the wings sustain
The bird no longer in his airy way ; 75
Rogeró leaves them all to sleep a prey.

The fatal tidings soon Alcina heard,
Rogeró had escap'd and forc'd the guard ;
At this such grief was o'er her senses spread,
That, for a time, her very soul was dead : 80
She tore her garments, and her face she bruis'd,
And oft of mad neglect herself accus'd.
Then swift to arms she summon'd all her crew,
When soon around her gather'd forces drew :
Of these two bands she fram'd, while one she sent 85
T' explore the path her lov'd Rogeró went ;
The other to the harbour took their way,
And there, with speed embarking, put to sea :
Their sails, unnumber'd, all the stream o'ercast :
With these the desolate Alcina pass'd ; 90
And, so Rogeró had possess'd her mind,
Her palace left without a guard behind.
This gave Melissa, plac'd in secret there,
An ample time her mischiefs to repair ;
To free the wretches who had long remain'd 95
In hapless state, in cruel thraldom chain'd.
Around the palace, searching every part,
She saw the spells of her malicious art ;
The magic seals from many a place she took ;
A thousand mystic forms and figures broke. 100
Then o'er each field she pass'd, each mead or grove ;
Where the sad victims of Alcina's love,

That, hid in fountains, trees, or beasts, deplor'd
 Their hopeless change, she to their shapes restor'd :
 These, when they once their forms recover'd, view'd, 105
 The brave Rogero's steps in haste pursu'd
 To Logistilla, parting thence in peace
 To Scythia, Persia, India, and to Greece,
 With grateful hearts: but foremost of the train
 The English duke resum'd his form again : 110
 The duke, to beauteous Bradamant ally'd ;
 For him the good Rogero first employ'd
 His influence with the wise enchantress-maid ;
 And gave his wondrous ring the knight to aid.
 Astolpho thus each manly grace regain'd, 115
 And, by Melissa's means, his arms obtain'd,
 With that fam'd lance of gold, which forc'd to yield
 The strongest warrior in the listed field.
 Argalia first, Astolpho next the lance
 Possess'd ; by this they both acquir'd in France 120

Ver. 117.—*lance of gold,*] This was the lance which Argalia brought with him into France, (see General View of Boyardo's Story) which after his death came into the possession of Astolpho, who at the tournament, made by Charlemain, overthrew with this all opponents. Bóyardo, in Orlando Innam. calls it, *una lanza dorata*. So the unerring spear of Cephalus, *cujus fuit aurea cuspis*.

Ovid Met. B. vii.

Britomartis, in Spenser, has a lance of the same kind :

..... a mighty spear,
 Which Bladud made, by magic art of yore,
 And us'd the same in battle ay to bear,
 Sith which it had been here preserv'd in store,
 For his great virtues proved long afore :
 For never wight, so fast in sell could sit,
 But him perforce unto the ground it bore.

A mighty name: the lance Melissa found,
 Kept in the palace of th' enchanted ground,
 With all his other arms, which from the duke,
 At his arrival there, Alcina took.
 This done, she mounts the horse that cuts the wind, 125
 Then seats Astolpho on the steed behind;
 And then to Logistilla they repair,
 Arriv'd an hour before Rogero there.

Meanwhile through rugged ways, with steep ascent,
 Rogero to sage Logistilla went; 130
 Till, numerous toils o'erpast, at noon of day
 Beside the seas he held his weary way;
 Slow pacing o'er the dry and barren strand,
 The flood on one, the hills on t'other hand:
 From the steep hills the beams reflected came; 135
 The earth was parch'd, the air was all on flame!
 The silent birds were hid in groves profound;
 The grass-hopper alone with tedious sound,
 While in the leafy shades conceal'd he lies,
 Deafens the hills, the vales, the seas and skies! 140

Ver. 140. *Deafens the hills, the vales—*] In this hyperbole Ariosto seems to allude to the following line of Virgil:

Sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta cicadis!

To this passage in the edition of Virgil by Dr. Warton, is subjoined the following note, which is well worth transcribing, as it may be thought in some sort to apologize for the strength of Ariosto's expression.

"I don't know how every body almost in England came to imagine that the *cicada* in the Roman writers was the same with our grass-hopper, for their characters are different enough to have prevented any such mistake. The *cicada* is what the Italians now call *cicala*, and the French *cigale*. They make one constant uniform noise all day long in summer time, which is extremely disagreeable and tire-

There heat, and thirst, and toil (an irksome crew !)
 The warrior's steps along the sand pursue.
 But since my muse must various tales rehearse,
 Nor one alone can claim my partial verse,
 I leave Rogero here, and hasten o'er 145
 To seek Rinaldo on the Scottish shore.

The king, his daughter fair, and all the land,
 With great regard Rinaldo entertain'd :
 At length the knight his embassy display'd
 To beg from Scotland and from England aid ; 150
 He shew'd, beside his monarch's earnest prayer,
 How glory call'd them to support the war.
 To this the king reply'd without delay,
 That to the furthest limits of his sway,
 His soul was ever ready to maintain 155
 The empire's rights, and weal of Charlemain ;
 With promise to prepare, ere many days,
 Whatever force his utmost power could raise,

some, particularly in the great heats. Their note is sharp and shrill in the beginning of summer, but hoarse and harsh towards the latter part of it. They are supposed to feed on the morning dew, and then fix on some sunny branch of a tree and sing all day long. It is hence that this insect is opposed to an ant in the old Æsopian fables, which is as industrious and inoffensive as the other is idle and troublesome. Virgil calls the cicada *querulæ* and *raucae*. Martial *argutæ* and *inhumanæ*. Their note is the more troublesome, because, in the great heats, they sing alone. Any one who has passed a summer in Italy, or in the south of France, will not think the epithet *inhumanæ* too severe for them." Spence.

See Dr. Warton's *Eclog.* II. ver. 16.

Ver. 145. *I leave Rogero.*—] He returns to Rogero, Book x. ver. 231. Rinaldo was last spoken of in the sixth book.

And had not years deprest his strength (he said)
Himself would combat at his army's head. 160

Yet should not age so damp his martial flame,
To keep him from the dangerous field of fame,
But that his son, his absence well supply'd,
With prudent counsel, and with courage try'd.
Though distant now from his paternal reign, 165
He hop'd to see him soon return again ;
While he th' auxiliar troops assembled drew,
To pass before his sight in just review.

The monarch spoke; and instant gives command
To levy horse and foot throughout the land; 170
Equips a numerous fleet to stem the tides,
And various stores for every need provides.

Now brave Rinaldo, hastening to depart
For England's realm, the king with grateful heart
To Berwick's town convey'd the valiant peer, 175
There, parting, shed for grief a tender tear.
Soon in the poop the prosperous breezes blew ;
Rinaldo went on board, and bade adieu,

The busy mariners their anchors ship,
And plough securely through the foamy deep 180
With rapid course: the silver Thames they gain,
Where first he mingles with the briny main :
Along the stream with oars and sails they fly,
Till London's stately towers salute their eye.

Rinaldo did from Charles and Otho bring 185
(Otho besieg'd in Paris with the king)
Commission to the prince, whose honour'd hand
By deputation rul'd the English land,
To raise supplies ; and from fair Albion's coast
Embark for Calais' shore the friendly host, 190

To Charlemain and France a welcome aid :
 The prince, who then the regal sceptre sway'd
 In Otho's stead, to brave Rinaldo's name
 Such honours paid, as Otho's self might claim ;
 Then, answering his demands, he summon'd all 195
 The neighbouring forces that obey'd his call ;
 With those that in the subject islands lay,
 To meet together on a certain day.

But here, my lord, with various themes my muse
 Th' example of the lyrist's art pursues, 200
 Who, shifting oft the strings, with skilful hands,
 Now high, now low, the changing note commands.
 While to Rinaldo was my verse confin'd,
 Angelica again employ'd my mind,
 Whom late we left, where, flying from his sight, 205
 She on an aged hermit chanc'd to light.
 Then to pursue her tale—she ask'd the way
 That led to where some ready vessel lay :
 Such anxious fears possess'd the tender maid,
 She deem'd all Europe could not yield her aid. 210
 Pleas'd with her wondrous charms the hoary sire
 Through his cold veins confess'd a sudden fire ;
 Then strove with heavenly converse to detain
 The parting fair-one, but he strove in vain.
 A hundred times he struck his ass, but still 215
 The stubborn beast was restive to his will :
 His walk was heavy, and his trot was worse ;
 Nor could he make him mend his tardy course.

Ver. 199. *But here, my lord,—*] A fresh address to his patron: this frequently occurs in the course of the work. Rinaldo is mentioned again at the review of the forces, Book x. ver. 507.

The virgin gone ; when scarce his sight survey'd
The late-worn track her palfrey's feet had made 220
A cave he sought, remote from human eyes,
There caus'd from earth unhallow'd fiends to rise :
From this infernal band a spright he chose,
On whom he best might his commands impose ;
And bade him on the palfrey act his part, 225
That with the damsel bore away his heart.
As the staunch hound that through the mountain dews,
With open mouth the hare or fox pursues,
When wheeling round he sees the flying prey,
Oft seems to bend his speed a different way, 230
Till, unawares, upon the wretch he flies,
And gripes with cruel jaws the bleeding prize.
The hermit thus, by hidden craft, design'd
Where'er she fled, Angelica to find.
His secret purpose well methinks I trace, 235
And shall discover in some future place.

The subtle demon, with his charge possest,
Now crept within th' unwary damsel's breast.
So lurking sparks at first in secret lie,
'Till bursting sheets of flame involve the sky. 240
Near the salt flood her lonely path she held,
Where on the Gascon shore the billows swell'd :
But soon the fiend, that in her palfrey lay,
To the deep seas impell'd his headlong way.
With terror struck, she strives to turn the rein ; 245
But further still he plunges in the main.

Ver. 244. *To the deep seas—*] This whole passage is copied from Ovid, in the fable of Jupiter and Europa.

What should she do, but firmly fix her seat?
Her robe she gathers round; her timorous feet
She draws aloft; while o'er her shoulders flow
Her locks, and in her face the zephyrs blow! 250
The rougher winds are hush'd; the surges cease
Their fury, by her charms compos'd to peace.
While flowing tears her cheeks and breast bedew,
Back to the shore she cast a mournful view;
She sees it now, alas! no longer near; 255
Still less and less the flying hills appear:
Till, wheeling to the right, a desert strand
The courser reach'd, and bore her safe to land,
Midst rocks and caves; what time the sinking light
Of Phœbus' beams resign'd the world to night. 260

Soon as the damsel found herself convey'd
To these drear wilds, whose sight alone dismay'd
The gazer's heart, immoveable she stood;
So fix'd, had any eye her figure view'd,
She seem'd a statue on the lonely sands: 265
Her hair was hanging loose; her clasping hands
Together join'd; in silent grief she mourn'd
With lips unmov'd: her eyes were upward turn'd,
As if t' accuse the high decrees of Heaven,
That all her days to misery had given! 270
At length she gave a vent to mighty woe,
Words found their way, and tears began to flow!

Relentless fate! what would'st thou more she cries
Since life itself will not thy rage suffice?
Why hast thou sav'd me from the gaping wave, 275
Where now my griefs had found a peaceful grave,
But that my life preserv'd might means supply
To persecute me more before I die!

By thee I'm banish'd from my regal seat,
Nor e'er must hope my native land to greet: 280
And O! far worse! have lost my spotless name,
For though my conscious thoughts are void of blame,
Yet, wandering ⁱⁿ us, I give too just pretence,
For slander to defame my innocence!
What **has** that wretched damsel left to boast, 285
What good on earth, whose virtuous praise is lost!
Alas! that fame which speaks me young and fair,
(Or true or false) but adds to my despair!
Nor can I thanks to Heaven for charms bestow,
For luckless charms, whence all my sorrows flow. 290
Through these, my brother, poor Argalia, dy'd;
No succour his enchanted arms supply'd.
For these did Agrican, the Tartar king,
My father Galaphron to ruin bring,
Once monarch of Cathay: 'tis hence I range 295
Forlorn, and every day my dwelling change.
My wealth, my friends, my honour, all is flown!
Yet am I still preserv'd for woes unknown.
Glut then thy utmost rage! O! fortune! send
Some savage beast these wretched limbs to rend. 300
From loathsome light my weary soul relieve,
And for my death my grateful thanks receive.

Thus in deep sorrow mourn'd the hapless dame,
Till in her sight the wily father came:

Ver. 295.—*my father, Galaphron—monarch of Cathay:—*] Albracca having been long besieged, was at last taken by storm, though not by Agrican, who was slain by Orlando, but by the enemies of Angelica, who took advantage of the absence of Orlando, Sacripant, and the other brave defenders of that princess. See *Orlando Innam.*

Her, from the summit of a rock, he view'd, 305
 As on the plain below she weeping stood.
 Six days before, arriv'd the hermit there,
 Borne by a demon strangely through the air;
 And now such looks of deep devotion wore,
 Not holy Paul, or blest Hilario more ! 310

When nearer fair Angelica he drew,
 Nor she the features of the hermit knew,
 The welcome sight her drooping spirits cheer'd,
 Though still deep anguish on her face appear'd.
 O! holy father! with thy pitying aid 315
 Relieve, she cry'd, a helpless, lonely maid;
 Then, with a broken voice, began to tell
 That mournful story, which he knew so well.

In pious strains, with hypocritic air,
 He now began to sooth the weeping fair ; 320
 While, as he spoke, his roving fingers press'd
 Her alabaster neck and heaving breast;
 Till, bolder grown, he clasp'd her in his arms :
 But here, resentment kindling all her charms,
 Back with her hand the feeble wretch she threw, 325
 While every feature glow'd with rosy hue.
 Then from his scrip he takes, of sovereign use,
 A little vial fill'd with magic juice ;

Ver. 310.—*holy Paul, or blest Hilario*] “ Paul, the first hermit, retired into the desert in the time of the emperor Valerian, where he lived hoily for one hundred and two years, in company with the blessed abbot Antonio. Hilario, bishop of Gallia, was sent into exile with Eusebius, by the emperor, who was an enemy to the Christians: he led an exemplary life, and wrought many miracles.”

Porcacchi.

Ver. 327. *Then from his scrip*—] Boyardo has a story something similar to this of Ariosto, where Flordelis, wife to Brandimart, meets

In those bright eyes, where love was wont to frame
His sharpest darts, and raise his purest flame, 330
A drop he sprinkles that had power to steep
Her heavy eye-lids in the dew of sleep.
Now prone on earth she sinks, a lovely prize,
Defenceless at his lawless will she lies ;
While, at his pleasure, he can wander o'er 335
Each nameless beauty, every grace explore.
Oft to her mouth his trembling lips are prest ;
And oft his kisses print her ivory breast.
None view his actions, on that desert coast :
But the soft hour of love with him is lost. 340
The hoary dotard, whose impure desire
Forgets what sage and reverend years require,
Shame of his kind ! with drowsy age opprest,
By slow degrees resigns his limbs to rest,
And every sense in dull oblivion laid, 345
Soon lies in slumber by the slumbering maid.

But now a fresh disaster fortune sent,
Who seldom leaves till all her darts are spent :
And here I must th' occasion first display
That draws me something from the path away : 350
In seas remote, beneath the western skies,
Beyond the Irish coast an island lies,
Ebuda call'd, on whose ill-fated ground
Th' inhabitants are now but thinly found.

with such another hermit, who casts her in a deep sleep, and carries her away from her husband, when she is afterwards delivered by a lion, who terrifies the hermit that had conveyed her to a cave. See likewise the old Fisherman and Florimel in Spenser, *Fairy Queen*, B. iii. C. viii.

A dreadful orc, and numerous monsters more, 355
 By Proteus sent, have ravag'd all the shore.
 The ancient stories (strange to hear !) relate,
 A powerful monarch govern'd once the state :
 This prince a daughter fair and young possess'd,
 With every grace and every virtue blest ; 360
 Whose heavenly charms, as on the strand she stood,
 Enflam'd the heart of Proteus midst the flood :
 The bloomy virgin by his love compell'd,
 Her pregnant womb a growing burthen swell'd.
 Most hateful to her sire was this to hear, 365
 Above all others impious and severe !
 Nor would he by remorse, or love, be led
 To save his hapless child's devoted head.
 His grandson (harmless object of his spite)
 Was murder'd ere he yet had seen the light ! 370
 Proteus, to whom 'tis given in charge to keep
 The herds of Neptune, ruler of the deep,

Ver. 355. *A dreadful orc*,—] The word *orca* in the Italian has no particular signification, but is applied to any monster or creature of the imagination : in the xviith book, *orco* is used for a deformed and dreadful giant : the word *orc* occurs in Milton :

The haunts of seals and orcs and sew-mew's clang !

Par. Lost, B. xi. ver. 835.

Ver. 356. *By Proteus sent*,—] Ariosto makes a strange mixture of the Christian and Pagan theology : Neptune, Proteus, and the other marine gods, are here introduced without scruple. Spenser in like manner employs the fables and symbols of the ancients, and makes the heathen deities agents in his poem ; and, like Ariosto, brings Proteus into the above-mentioned tale of Florimel and the Fisherman :

Proteus is shepherd of the seas of yore,
 And hath the charge of Neptune's mighty herd ;
 An aged sire with head all frore,
 And sprinkled frost upon his dewy beard, &c.

For his lov'd consort's death indignant burn'd,
And to revenge her all his fury turn'd.

With speed he sent ashore his savage train, 375

The phocæ, orcs, and monsters of the main;

That not alone their rage on herds employ'd,

But villages and husbandmen destroy'd.

The soldiers arm'd, by night and day prepar'd,

High on the city's walls maintain'd the guard, 380

While from the fields the trembling people flew:

At length to learn what course they must pursue

To end their plague, the oracle they sought;

And thence the deputies this answer brought:

“That Heaven requir'd them with unweary'd care

“To seek a damsel, like the former, fair; 386

“A victim doom'd beside the roaring tide,

“T' appease the God for her that guiltless dy'd.

“So might th' offended power the maid receive,

“And from their woes th' afflicted land relieve. 390

“But if the scourge remain'd, they must present

“Another dame, 'till Proteus' wrath was spent.”

I dare not true, nor false, this story hold,

Which former annals have of Proteus told:

Thus far 'tis known---in this unhappy place, 395

A law prevails against the female race,

To nourish daily with their guiltless blood

An hideous monster, rising from the flood,

A dreadful orc, that near the isle remain'd,

When every other had the seas regain'd. 400

Hard is the lot of woman ever found,

But harder still on this unpitying ground.

O wretched virgins! in a luckless hour

By fortune cast on this ill-omen'd shore,

Where, by the waves, in cruel watch they stand 405
To seize on strangers with an impious hand ;
Whose lives may for the nation's guilt atone,
And thus preserve the numbers of their own.
From port to port the vessels scour the main,
New victims for the sacrifice to gain. 410

Some maids by force they win, and some by stealth,
By flattery these, and those by hopes of wealth ;
And thus they drew such numbers in their power,
As every prison fill'd, and every tower.

A pinnacle, that had sail'd from land to land, 415
Passing before the solitary strand,
Where on the grassy turf the lovely maid,
Unblest Angelica, asleep was laid,
Their anchor cast, the seamen stopp'd, to bring
Wood from the grove, and water from the spring, 420
And there beheld the flower of beauty's charms,
Clasp'd in the holy father's reverend arms !
O! precious prize! adorn'd with every grace!
Too precious far for such a barbarous race!
O! cruel fortune! canst thou then maintain 425
Thy sway on earth with such relentless reign,
To yield an offering to a monster's rage,
Those graces that could Agrican engage
From Caucasus Albracca's force to brave,
With half of Scythia there to find a grave! 430

That beauty priz'd by Sacripant before
His martial glory and his regal power !
That beauty, which the mighty fame defac'd
Of Anglant's knight, and laid his senses waste!
That beauty, which had rouz'd such chiefs to arms, 435
And fill'd the eastern empire with alarms!

Now lies forlorn, to woe and death betray'd,
Without a friend to hear, a friend to aid !

The damsel sleeping on the senseless ground,
Before she wak'd, with ready chains they bound ; 440

They seiz'd the hermit too ; and with their prey
Back to the strand again resum'd their way.

To the high mast the bellying canvas strain'd,
The vessel soon the mournful island gain'd.

Yet pity wrought so far her charms to spare, 445
For many days they kept the virgin-fair ;

'Till now, exhausted all their hapless store,
Weeping they led her to the destin'd shore.

What tongue can tell the sorrows, tears, and sighs,
The lamentations loud that pierc'd the skies ! 450

'Twas strange the pitying rocks did not divide,
When to the stone her lovely limbs were ty'd.

I can no more---such pangs my breast assail,
The muse must leave untold the piteous tale ;

And to a theme less gloomy turn the strain, 455
'Till her torn mind recovers strength again.

Nor squalid snakes, nor spotted tigress stung
With dreadful fury for her ravish'd young,

Or aught that in the tract of Afric lands

Envenom'd wanders o'er the burning sands, 460 }
Could view without remorse this maiden's cruel bands.

Had fame the tidings to Orlando brought,
Who late in Paris' walls his fair-one sought ;

Ver. 462. *Had fame the tidings—*] See the before cited book in
Spenser, where Florimel falls into the hands of the old Fisherman.

O! ye brave knights! that boast this lady's love
Where be ye now.....

Or the two warriors, whom the friar misled
 With lying forms in Stygian darkness bred : 465
 For her a thousand dangers had they dar'd,
 And flown with speed to be the virgin's guard :
 But should the fatal news their souls surprise
 The distance now their timely aid denies !

Meantime was Paris close besieg'd around 470
 By king Troyano's son in arms renown'd :
 One dreadful day the foes so warmly press'd,
 They nearly enter'd and the town possess'd :
 Then had not Heaven fulfill'd the Christian prayer,
 And pour'd a deluge through the darken'd air, 475
 That day had sunk before the Pagan lance,
 The sacred empire, and the fame of France !

But if that thou sir Satyrane didst weet,
 Or thou sir Peridure her sorry state,
 How soon would ye assemble many a fleet,
 To fetch from sea what ye at land lost late.
 Towers, cities, kingdoms ye would ruinate,
 In your avengement and dispiteous rage ;
 Ne ought your burning fury more abate :
 But if sir Calidore could it presage,
 No living creature could his cruelty assuage.

" This apostrophe to the knights of Fairy land, and calling on them by name, to assist the distressed Florimel, seems imitated from Ariosto, who twice uses the same kind of apostrophe ; where Angelica is going to be devoured by a monster, and where Rogero is flung into prison."

Upton's Notes on Spenser.

Ver. 470. *Meantime was Paris—*] He returns to Angelica, the xth Book, ver. 647.

Ver. 475. *And pour'd a deluge—*] In this short account of the siege of Paris, Ariosto alludes to a more particular description which had been given by Boyardo, in the latter end of his poem. See General View of Boyardo's Story.

The continuation of this siege is resumed by Ariosto, B. xiv. ver. 491.

The great Creator turn'd his eyes, and heard
 The just complaint by aged Charles preferr'd,
 And sudden, where all human help was vain, 480
 The fire extinguish'd with tempestuous rain.
 The wise will ever to th' Almighty bend,
 Whose power can best the falling state defend!
 The pious monarch own'd, in grateful thought,
 The hand divine that had his safety wrought. 485

At night Orlando, on his restless bed,
 Revolves distressful fancies in his head;
 While here and there his thoughts each other chase,
 And never long maintain their flitting place.
 So from a water clear, the trembling light 490
 Of Phœbus, or the silver queen of night,

[Ver. 490. *So from a water clear,--*] See Virgil, *Æn.* viii.

Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ænis
 Sole percussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,
 Omnia pervolat late loca, jamque sub auras
 Erigitur, summiq; ferit laquearia tecti.

So from a brazen vase the trembling stream
 Reflects the lunar or the solar beam;
 Swift and elusive of the dazzled eyes,
 From wall to wall the dancing glory flies;
 Thence to the cieling shoot the glancing rays,
 And o'er the roof the quivering splendor plays.

Pitt.

Camöens, as Mr. Mickle observes, has the same simile:

As in the sun's bright beam the gamesome boy
 Plays with the shining steel or crystal toy,
 Swift and irregular, by sudden starts,
 The living ray with viewless motion darts,
 Swift o'er the wall, the roof, the floor, by turns,
 The sun-beam dances, and the radiance burns.

Mickle's Lusiad, B. viii.

Along the spacious rooms with splendor plays,
Now high, now low, and shifts a thousand ways.
Angelica, returning to his mind,
Who scarce was ever from his thoughts disjoin'd, 495
He feels with double force the pain increase,
That seem'd awhile by day compos'd to peace.
With her from India to the west he came,
Where fortune robb'd him of his beauteous dame :
And vainly trac'd her steps, since Bourdeaux' field 500
Compeli'd the banded powers of France to yield.
For this Orlando's careful breast was mov'd,
And oft for this his folly he reprov'd !

My life's best joy ! how have I err'd ! (he said)
Why have I thus so fair a nymph betray'd ? 505
When on thy charms each day to feed my sight,
On thy dear converse dwell with fond delight,
Thy goodness gave—ev'n then—O ! fatal hour !
I tamely gave thee into Namus' power !
Well might my soul have such an act excus'd ? 510
Not Charles himself had my desires refus'd.
First had I every chance of battle try'd ;
First let them from my breast my heart divide !
But Charles, and all his force, too weak had prov'd
To ravish from my arms the maid I lov'd ! 515
At least I might have plac'd her with a guard
In Paris, or some strong retreat prepar'd :
Who like myself, should every danger brave
From threatening ills the virgin-fair to save !

Ver. 500.—*since Bourdeaux' field.*—] The great battle in which the Christian army was defeated, described by Boyardo, and mentioned by Ariosto in the beginning of the poem.

Far dearer than the blood that bathes my heart; 520
How ill have I perform'd a lover's part !
Ah ! whither now, without my aid, alone,
Whither, so young and beauteous, art thou gone !
As when the sun withdraws his evening rays,
A lamb, forsaken, midst the forest strays 525
With tender bleats, in hopes the shepherd's ear
At length may chance the plaintive notes to hear ;
Till from afar the wolf the sound receives,
And for his loss the hapless shepherd grieves.
Then art thou fall'n to cruel wolves a prey, 530
Thy faithful knight Orlando far away !
That dear, that virgin treasure, which posscest,
Had made Orlando, with th' immortals blest,
Which at thy chaste desire I kept unstain'd,
Some cruel spoiler now perhaps has gain'd. 535
Forbid it Heaven ! all other sufferings shed,
All other plagues, on my devoted head !
But should it be---this hand shall yield relief,
And end at once my being and my grief.

Now lost in sleep the whole creation lay, 540
And cheer'd their spirits from the toils of day.
Some sunk in down ; and some the herbage press'd ;
While some on rocks, on oak, or myrtles rest.
Yet thou, Orlando, seek'st in vain to close
Thy wakeful lids, distracted from repose : 545
Or if a moment seals thy weary eyes,
In thy short slumber painful visions rise.

Orlando dreamt, that on a river's side,
With odorous flowers and shrubs diversify'd,

Ver. 524. *As when the sun--*] This is a tender beautiful simile, and altogether original.

He gaz'd transported on that heavenly face, 550
Which Love himself had ting'd with rosy grace;
On those bright stars, whose glances food supply
To souls that in his nets entangled lie;
On that dear virgin, whose all-conquering eyes
Could in his breast his amorous heart surprise! 555

While thus he seem'd possest of every joy
That can a happy lover's thoughts employ,
A sudden storm the chearful day o'ercast,
The tender flowerets wither'd in the blast,
The forest shook, as when, in wintry skies, 560
South, east, and west with mingled fury rise!
Now while he shelter sought, the mournful knight
Seem'd in the gloom to lose the damsels sight.
Now here, now there, he search'd the woods around,
And made the country with her name resound. 565
But while a thousand fears his soul dismay'd,
He heard her well-known voice imploring aid:
Swift to the sound he turn'd, but turn'd in vain,
His eyes no more the object lov'd regain;
When to his ears this dreadful warning came, 570
"Ne'er hope on earth again to see the dame!"

The lover, waking, found the vision fled,
And saw his falling tears bedew the bed.
Unmindful now that dreams are empty shade,
By fancy form'd, he deem'd his dearest maid 575
With danger press'd, and from his couch he flew,
And o'er his limbs his plated armour drew;
Then Brigiadoro took without delay,
But not a squire attendant on his way.

Ver. 578. — *Brigliadoro* —] *Briglia d'oro*, i. e. golden bridle: the name of Orlando's horse in Boyardo, whence Spenser calls sir

From prying eyes the more to hide his name, 580
 Nor give each vulgar tongue t' asperse his fame,
 He wore not those known arms, and ample shield
 With red and white distinguish'd in the field;
 But arms of sable hue, whose darkness shows
 A just resemblance to his inward woes. 585
 Not many years elaps'd, his matchless might
 From Amostantes won this suit in fight.

Now midst the silence of the midnight hour,
 He left his sovereign Charles; the Christian power
 He left; nor bade adieu to Brandimart, 590
 Once his lov'd friend and partner of his heart!
 But when with golden tresses round her head,
 The morn arose from rich Tithonus' bed,
 And from earth's face the humid curtains drew,
 Orlando's flight, incens'd, the monarch knew: 595

Guyon's horse, Brigadore: this horse was formerly the property of Almontes.

See Note to Book i. ver. 202.

Ver. 582.—*those known arms*,—] The armour which Orlando won from Almontes, brother to Troyano.

Ver. 587.—*Amostantes*—] The name of this warrior, who is not mentioned in Boyardo, appears in a muster of the forces brought over by Almontes: after the death of Almontes he was killed by Orlando.

See *Aspramonte*, C. v. xx.

Ver. 590.—*Brandimart*,] Brandimart is one of the principal personages in the Orlando Innamorato, where he makes a more conspicuous figure than in the Furioso. Brandimart and Flordelis are described by Boyardo, as a pattern of conjugal affection, and this character of them is preserved by Ariosto: they were Pagans by birth, but Flordelis was first converted by Rinaldo, and Brandimart afterwards by the joint arguments of Orlando and Flordelis. Brandimart is introduced as the almost inseparable companion of Orlando, whom he accompanies to the siege of Albracca.

See *Orlando Innam.*

With deep concern his nephew's loss he heard,
When honour call'd him now, where danger rear'd
Her dreadful front, to guard from hostile hands
His king, his country, and his social bands.
Nor could he hide his anger, but express'd 600
The just resentment kindled in his breast;
With threats, if absent long, the recreant knight
Should dearly mourn this ill-concerted flight.

But noble Brandimart, whose faith well try'd,
No chance could shake, whom nothing could divide 605
From his lov'd friend; who inly hop'd once more
Orlando to his fellows to restore;
And scorn'd to hear reproach his fame upbraid,
Swift from the host his eager steps convey'd;
Nor would to Flordelis his thoughts disclose, 610
Lest her fond love should his design oppose.
His wedded dame was she, his soul's delight,
Scarce was he ever absent from her sight:
The charms of beauty in her person shin'd,
And every prudent grace adorn'd her mind! 615
Yet, parting thus, he hop'd ere close of day
Again to measure back his former way:
But many a chance the wandering warrior prov'd,
That long detain'd him from the fair he lov'd.

A tedious month his consort stay'd in vain, 620
In hopes to see her Brandimart again;
Till fear and love her breast so strongly rend,
She quits the walls without a guide or friend;
And seeks him long in many a distant state,
As, in its place, the story shall relate: 625
Of these no more—the muse with nobler flight
Now turns the strain to great Anglante's knight;

Who, having chang'd his arms of well known fame,
Won from Almontes, to the portal came,
And to a chief, who there maintain'd the guard, 630
In a low voice his mighty name declar'd :
Soon at the word, he let the draw-bridge down,
When swift Orlando issued from the town,
And took the way to pass the slumbering foe :
What followed then th' ensuing book shall show. 635

END OF VOL. I.



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